MSCC Yorkshire Centre Newsletter

Early Summer 2020

Editorial

Putting this issue together your editors had to ask themselves the question: What would make our readers happy and cheer them up if they're missing driving their Morgans and craving a holiday? Well, look what's on page 19; an Iberian Odyssey by Sam and Chris Macfie to whet your appetite for when Boris gives us all the green light - let's hope it's not stuck on red for much longer. The much anticipated trip to the Bulb fields organised by Neil has somehow been imaginatively re-imagined by none other than the keen Greens, who have given you their brilliant take on "Car Owner Virus" - on page 15. Jan Lawson sent us a photo of "Arnie" taken after she had just spent SIX (!) hours cleaning and polishing him. As a result, we put out a plea to members to send us their photos of their cleaned and polished "pampered pets". And waited … and waited … Jan's was the only one. Shame on you Yorkshire Centre. Therefore, Arnie gets the well-deserved top spot of front page. Also there are stories of two other foreign trips - the Grindrod's jaunt to Lugano and Ted Sayer's adventures in Austria. Thanks to all our other contributors; Russ for his article on fitting a roll bar; Carl Aveyard for sending us a really great "blast from the past", which prompts the question - are there any more photos of UWB 97L out there?; Maurice, who sent us some great photos - one of which is on the last page and really encapsulates the joy of Morgan motoring; also, Sue Franklin for sending us a photo of a really useful way of using your Yorkshire Centre PPE worn by a Yorkshire Centre member who was doing his bit working flat out delivering supplies.

There will be another issue to look forward to in July with stories quite a few of you will enjoy - Nick Riley on the delights of owning a 1947 Morgan as well as more details of his other car - a Riley! Very appropriate in the circumstances. As well as a story from John Davison who bought his Morgan and then discovered …. you'll just have to wait and see! Sam Macfie is bravely tackling the Me and My Motor spot and we're really looking forward to hearing his story.

At newsletter HQ, 'Morgy' has been tinkered with - a new steering rack gaiter has been fitted and although we could have used the tin top to do our "essential shopping", we opted instead to take the Morgan out on a beautiful early May day. Who would have ever thought a trip to Waitrose could be so uplifting! Finally, although these are horrible times we leave you with a quote from Martha Washington, wife of the first American President, "The greater part of our happiness depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances." But we're Brits - so KBO everybody.

Francis and Sheila newsletter.elvins@btinternet.com

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John's Jottings

As I sit in the garden enjoying the sunshine, I reflect on what has been in the past six weeks or so a massive change in our way of lives because of Covid-19. Although frustrating and disappointing for many of us that we haven't been able to visit our family, friends or have a bit of a run out in the Morgan, our enforced isolation is really a rather small price to pay compared to some.

Hopefully by the end of May we might see some loosening of restrictions which will allow us a bit more freedom to move about a bit more, and may be allow us to have a run out in the Morgan without the fear of having our collars felt, even if it might mean wearing a face mask of some sort. The Yorkshire Centre snood would look eminently smarter than a standard face mask.

Thank you one and all for the articles you've supplied in response to our Editors' request for copy, so much so there's enough for two editions for summer, this one and a second sometime probably in July or August. There's plenty to read and enjoy, on trips lost and won, plus an excellent article from Russ on how he fitted a roll bar to his Morgan and Sheila's fun article on the giving names to our cars.

Unfortunately the current situation has somewhat decimated our current Programme of Events, certainly for May and June, and sadly the mid week break to Llangollen in early July will more than likely have to be postponed until July next year. However as the restrictions evolve we'll get a better idea of what will and will not be allowed and we can adapt the programme accordingly. Even so I appreciate there may well be an understandable reluctance from quite a few of you about attending any events in the near future that we may be able to organise. Depending on what form the restrictions may take, would there be much fun in social distancing with a face mask on so we'll just have to wait and see what the next couple of months brings and take it from there. However we do have the September Weekend Away and a few other events later in the year to look forward to.

Anyway lets be optimistic and look forward to a summer where we can hopefully get together and enjoy a bit of good old fashioned Yorkshire Centre fellowship.

I would also like to extend a warm Yorkshire Centre welcome to five new members, Glen & Mary Barker, Nigel & Jenny Wilkinson and Tony Robinson who have recently joined our ranks. I look forward to meeting you all as and when we emerge from this nuisance of a lockdown.

As usual our thanks go to Francis and Sheila for their hard work in bringing us yet another excellent edition of our Newsletter.

Mal and I are both fit and well and we hope we find you the same, safe, well and Covid free. Please keep safely tucked up and we'll all meet up again some time soon.

John and Mal

Lugano Revisited

By Ken Grindrod

Back in the late 1960's whilst at senior school, I was fortunate to go on a school holiday to Lugano in southern Switzerland which left a long lasting impression on me. Due to that impression I convinced my parents to also visit Lugano. So in May 1973 my parents, younger sister and myself set off with a 1967 Morris Oxford estate and a touring caravan to visit Switzerland. This was also a memorable trip especially going up the Susten Pass to Andermatt and then down the original St Gotthard Pass with plenty of hairpin bends, eventually arriving in Lugano. Over the years my Mum used to say how she enjoyed the trip, especially Andermatt, which created a long lasting impression.

Jump forward 43 years and with early retirement in place and a new Morgan Plus 4 on order, I suggested that Helen and myself should replicate the trip I did back in 1973. So out came the maps and we started to plan the trip.

Setting off from home we drove to Folkstone staying overnight at a hotel a short distance from the Channel Tunnel where we had an early train booked the following morning. After a quick journey under the English Channel, we set off for our first stop in Luxembourg where we stayed for a couple of nights. Lovely city and well worth a visit.

Next stop was Basel in northern Switzerland which was a joy to visit with a wonderful old town and the river Rhine. The weather in both Luxemburg and Basel was very good with even my shorts making an appearance.

Leaving Basel behind, we set of with the hood down for what I hoped would be a very memorable trip for Helen over the Swiss Alps; sadly that was not to be the case. After about an hour's drive the rain started, so it was hood up and continue the drive. We were unable to go up the Susten Pass as it was closed because of snow, so we had to take to the main road up the Alps before arriving at the plateau where Andermatt can be found. The rain continued

to get worse so after taking a few photos it was back on the road heading for the St. Gotthard Pass, driving through very heavy rain, mist and fog before arriving at the summit at 2106 metres. My intention was to go down the old pass but like the Susten Pass it was closed with snow and due to the weather being so bad we continued down the newer pass, driving through some of the worst weather I have ever driven through before arriving in Lugano.

For anyone who has never been to Lugano, it is a lovely old Swiss town on the lake side with lovely shops, plenty of walks and a nice park to visit. The poor weather did not spoil our visit but I did get frustrated when on the morning of our departure the sun came out and showed the sights off at their best.

Leaving Lugano behind, hood down we set of for our next destination of Geneva, going into Italy for a short while before going over the Simplon Pass which was, to say the least, spectacular before going into France to travel along the southern side of Lake Geneva, then going back into Switzerland to our destination. Just after arriving the rain came and stayed with us all the time we were in the City.

After an early start we set off following the north side of Lake Geneva towards Lausanne before heading north leaving Switzerland behind going into France, and 300 + miles later arriving at Saint Simeon, which is 30 miles to the east of Paris where we stayed for a week and enjoyed some sun for a change. During our stay in France we had some nice drives in the French countryside, especially in the Champagne region, before returning home having done just over 2300 miles.

People's reaction to seeing a Morgan was amazing with plenty of thumbs up, lights flashing and horns blasting, and I must say I am a very proud owner.

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Ken Grindrod (Previously published in Linmog's newsletter in 2016)

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Barbara's New Roll Bar

By Russ Sayers

"My daughter said you must be mad or very brave to do this to Barbara."

After seeing the photographs of my brother's 4/4 badly damaged and laying upside down after being hit from behind by a HGV on the M1, I decided that Barbara, our Plus 4, needed a roll bar. Thankfully both Terry and his wife Barbara walked away. I must say this incident came as quite a shock to both Ange and I.

After doing some research into who could supply me with a Roll Bar which would not entail me having to modify the hood and would in the end look good, the decision was made to purchase a Librands Roll Bar. I enquired about the cost to have it fitted which was going to be equal to what I had paid for the Roll Bar. Gulp! The decision was made to fit it myself.

I had been planning the job for a number of weeks. Librands emailed me the fitting instructions. I then started Preparing Barbara by taking out the seats and anything else which needed to be removed. And obtain any tools I thought I would need. I have a good selection of both hand and electrical tools but the one part of the installation which did make me a little concerned was where I would have to cut the ash frame which fits flush with the inner wheel arches (the inner wheel arches are trimmed in leather which could be easily damaged by the saw blade). With this in mind, I didn't want to use any electrical cutting tool, and concentrated on finding a suitable hand saw. My first thought was the old pad saw. The nearest saw I could find was a plunge saw used for cutting plaster board. I purchased one but I was still not happy with it. It was the correct size but the blade was far too coarse. Also I needed to be able to use it in both my left and right hand. I kept looking but couldn't find what I was looking for. Then whilst on Holiday in Ypres, Belgium, Ange and I visited a DIY Super store, which is what I can only call an Aladdin's Cave, and there I found for 4 Euros a small hand saw with fine tooth blade which could be turned from right to left handed by simply lifting a spring loaded knurled knob on the handle. The blade turned around on a pin mounted in the middle

of the saw's body handle then faces the other way (see the photograph). This was just what I was looking for and worked well on both the off and nearside of the ash frame.

After offering up and marking out the ash frame, I then masked the leather trim covering the wheel arches, just in case the teeth of the saw blade were to catch on the leather. The ash frame-work was cut where the main side brackets were to be fitted. I must say the saw was great. I simply turned the blade and could work easily on both sides of the ash frame. I then trimmed the excess leather which is glued to the back panel of the parcel shelf, just behind the seats. (This leather was not discarded, I will come back to this later.) After making a note of where the brake and fuel lines were fitted on the outside edge of the chassis, I then drilled the inner wheel arch and the chassis. This was made easier than it could have been with the use of my angle drill. But it was very tight getting into the rear bracket to fit the nuts and bolts. A second pair of hands and a little more height would have been helpful. But with a little bit of ingenuity I got there.

When the offside main bracket is fitted it exposes the main 12 volt supply from the battery to the dash board, which runs across the chassis just where the base plate bolts to the chassis. Thankfully by undoing a couple of cable clips I managed to move the cable out of the way so I could drill the chassis. During my research I took photographs showing the wire had been left wrapped in leather to try and hide the cable. I decided to make a metal cover and trim it with the excess leather I mentioned earlier. I fabricated the metal cover with the use of a pair of tin snips, my large vice and an old Morgan King Pin, which I used to form the curve at the top.

The exposed main power cable...

... and its leather trimmed cover

Once the brackets were fitted on both the offside and nearside inner wheel arches and chassis, I then fitted the cross member which braces the bottom of the roll bar at the rear of the parcel shelf. This brace, along with the Roll Bar Hoop pulls the offside and near side brackets together (see the photograph below).

The rear cross link

The roll bar hoop fitted in place

It was at this point I needed a second pair of hands. I was struggling to marry the mounting plates of the offside and nearside brackets with the Roll Bar Hoop mountings. Thankfully my good friend Stuart Kellett came and assisted me in fitting the Main Roll Bar Hoop on to the two side brackets. We had to push the Roll Bar apart by the means of a car jack and a piece of timber to get the holes in the base plates of the Roll Bar Hoop to align with the captive nuts in the 4 base plates of the offside and nearside brackets. The holes on the Hoop were not that far out but it just needed a little bit of assistance to get the them to marry up with each other.

This done I then turned my attentions to the wooden parcel shelf, which sits above the back axle. This needed marking out and cutting. I decided I needed to cut the shelf into two parts to enable me, when doing any servicing work, to easily lift the shelf in and out of position. I fabricated a wooden turn buckle to match the ones fitted by Morgan out of an off cut piece of plywood I had in the garage (see the photograph).

I decided that I had to get the carpet cut and re-trimmed in red, where needed, to match the original. This was done at Pickering's of Bradford.

By fitting the Roll Bar, I made the Tonneau cover quite useless (not that it had been any use in the past). In the past I have always used the Tonneau Covers on all my MG's, Singer 9's and Morgans. Sadly I found this one to be quite impractical and a pain to use. I have always had it in mind to make it more user-friendly. So whilst Barbara was at Pickering's, I gave them my

thoughts on how I would like to have it modified and asked them for their suggestions on what they thought could be done. Here are a couple photographs showing the modified Tonneau Cover. The cover now fits as an extended Hood envelope completely covering behind the seats and any luggage carried on the parcel shelf. It's held tightly in place by the 2 head restraints. I must say I'm very pleased with the end result of the Tonneau Cover. By the way, the Morgan Emblem fitted on the Hood Envelope is a leather Morgan Book Mark. Pickering's also fitted this on for me.

We often use the luggage rack and have had to adapt a high level brake light to fasten on to the luggage by the use of air elastic straps. I have never been very happy with this. I have seen high level lights fitted on Roll Bars before, I think mainly for racing. So I obtained a suitable light which I could mount onto the Roll Bar by the use of 2 'P' clips. At first I fitted the light in the middle of the Roll Bar. This was not practical making it quite difficult to use the windscreen mirror, so I decided to move it over to the nearside of the bar. This was because we mainly use the high level brake light when we are touring abroad. I have made it so that the 'P' clips are not a tight fit allowing the light to be moved out of the way when the hood is being raised or dropped.

Feel and Drive of the car.

My first impressions: What an improvement in the handling! Barbara holds the road much better and doesn't seem to bounce around like she did before the fitting of the Roll Bar.

I also must say I'm very pleased with the outcome of both the Roll Bar, in chrome instead of black. Even though it's no longer a Tonneau Cover but an extra-large Hood Cover, I feel it enhances the look of the Morgan. And the Tonneau cover can now be used.

The big plus is, we feel much safer when out on the road.

If anyone has any questions, please feel free to ask.

Russ Sayers

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Ted's Adventure to Austria, 2019

Day 1: Saturday 18th May 2019

My owners, Russ and Ange Sayers, and their 2012 red Plus 4, Barbara, and I, Ted, boarded the 18.30 Ferry from Hull. After settling into the cabin, Russ and Ange went for their dinner leaving me to look after the mini bar and the snacks. Yummy! After their lovely meal we all settled down and had a lovely crossing to Belgium.

Day 2: Sunday 19th May.

We disembarked at Zeebrugge and had a leisurely drive to our first hotel, The Gulliver in Luxembourg. Russ and Ange then went to enjoy a nice 3 course dinner and were able to meet up with the other 2 couples on the tour, Roy and Edith in their BMW convertible and John and Pat in their MGC. As you might gather it was not a Morgan event.

Day 3: Monday 20th May.

After breakfast, we all then got into our cars to drive to the second of our one night stops, the Best Western at Ulm in Germany. We chose the direct route to take us along the autobahns so we could find the service station that sold the clean air pass in order to let us into Ulm. We eventually found the service station and we bought the pass. We then found our way back onto the autobahn and drove to our second night's stop. A nice dinner was had by Russ and Ange and the other 4 people, followed by another good night's sleep.

Day 4: Tuesday 21st May.

We all drove to our main hotel of the holiday, The hotel Kroneck in Kirchboerg, Tyrol. This was an easy to locate hotel, right in the Austrian Alps and was lovely. Both Russ and Ange enjoyed the surroundings, did lots of walks around the area, enjoyed the gorgeous food and complimentary tea and cakes every day and the free bar on an evening. And they

were put together with the other 4 people from their tour so they could meet up on an evening and swap stories of how their days had been. We had 5 nights in the hotel Kroneck so Russ and Ange took advantage of the spa and steam room and the outdoor pool that the hotel had to offer. Bliss! And they also took me on excursions to the Krimml Falls which were spectacular, the towns of Kitzbuhel, Berchtesgarten, Edelweisshutte and Zell am See. All these places are beautiful and set up high in the Austrian Alps. As you can see on the photographs, there was still plenty of snow about but we did still have the roof down on Barbara most days. Now the highlight of the trip had to be the day we spent driving the Grossglockner route and visiting the Heiligenblut am Grossglockner. What a spectacular drive up and down that was. Now it has to be said that Russ did notice that Barbara was starting to slightly cough out of place a bit, one of the symptoms was the trip counter

stopped working so we were unable to see our true mileage, but more about that later. After a wonderful 5 nights, including celebrating Ange's 60th birthday (the hotel staff made a fuss, decorated the table and provided a cake for her), we all left to go on to our homeward journeys.

Day 10: Sunday 26th May.

Our second to last stop was in a converted castle, the Schlosshotel Beuggen at Rheinfeldon, Germany. It is located right beside the river Rhine. Beautiful scenery and the weather was perfect too. Another lovely stay and dinner and a good night's sleep in our room overlooking the river.

Day 11: Monday 27th May.

Our final drive to our hotel, the Best Western in Soissons, France. After a memorable drive through deserted towns and roads, Russ and Ange parked Barbara up in the underground car park and went for a very welcome large

beer! Because Barbara was showing signs of misbehaving and we only just made it to the hotel. Never mind, Russ said we will deal with this in the morning.

Day 12: Tuesday 28th May.

After breakfast, we loaded up Barbara and paid our bar bill. Then when we tried to start her, she wouldn't. After a couple of hours onto the insurance company's European rescue service, a truck arrived to take her back on her long journey home. Well that made a problem for Russ, Ange and myself to get back to the ferry port. It was then that Roy and Edith came to our rescue. They were not going back until the day after, from Calais so were booked into a B and B for the night near the port. So they amazingly said that they would put our belongings into their car and drive us to get the ferry at 5.30pm. We rung Scenic Tours who organised for us to be on as foot passengers. We all piled into Roy and Edith's car, sat on bags, had stuff on our knees and we got to the port for 15.30pm. We were so grateful to them for going out of their way to help us. After thanking them and making sure that they were reimbursed we embarked on to the ferry and enjoyed the evening crossing.

Day 13: Wednesday 29th May.

We arrived back into Hull at 0930am. There was a taxi waiting to take us and our luggage to Enterprise car hire where there was a hire car waiting to get us back to our home in Farsley. We eventually arrived back home, dropped the hire car off but poor Barbara was not delivered safely back home until 3 weeks later on Tuesday 18th June.

So, all things considered I enjoyed my little adventure to Austria and the high Alpine Road. And Russ eventually got Barbara back safely home to working again. I was hoping to have an adventure to see the Bulbs in April 2020 but unfortunately we all had to cancel our holidays due to the Corona Virus pandemic. Never mind, there will be other holidays to enjoy when all this is over. Bye for now and every one stay as safe as you can.

Love from Ted (aka Ange Sayers).

PS - The problems with Barbara were eventually diagnosed as a faulty radiator and the circuit board behind the dashboard having an intermittent fault. All better now but Barbara is Sorned until we can have her out on the road again and I can go on more Morgan adventures!

ISA Had a Dream...about a Trip That Never Was...

Or, "Life B C (before Coronavirus) and beyond"

It all started way back, towards the end of last summer, when, following a bit of a discussion at a West Yorkshire Branch noggin of the Yorkshire Centre MSCC, someone, who shall remain nameless - but could sound a bit like Neil and Viv - tentatively suggested that it might be a nice idea to have a Morgan Trip out to Holland - sorry, Netherlands (and that's something else that's changed recently), around Easter time, specifically to visit the beautiful Dutch Bulb Fields and the magnificent Keukenhof Gardens to see their world famous display of Tulips and associate flora.

Now, always being one for a bit of a trip off, Isa thought it sounded like a splendid idea. Neil, who shall still remain nameless, contacted those nice people at The Scenic Car Tours (SCT) and put forward the idea.

Not only was a week-long package tour put together, but with suggested add-ons to take in countries further afield.

The seed was planted. A total of 18 intrepid travellers in 9 Morgans signed up. Well before Christmas 2019, deposits were paid and planning took shape.

The dream was for all 9 cars to meet at Hull Docks for an overnight ferry to Rotterdam, and onward from there. Plenty of time to think about the details over the long, dark winter nights.

Isa considered the future, and settled down to rest in the garage. Not that she's taken off the road over winter, nor put into mothballs, so to speak, she doesn't like mothballs, and the fumes play havoc with her fuel injection!

It looks like we've got a plan...

Time moved on, balance of payments were made, the SCT sent out the comprehensive tour pack, and all was looking good.

Getting excited now, Isa set about thinking of the trip,.....going to Hull to catch a FERRET? I'm sure that's what they said. I know that we come from deepest, darkest Halifax, so I suppose it's easier to fit a ferret into a Morgan that a whippet! and what's all this about leaving a deposit? I had one of those once from a recalcitrant seagull on a day trip to the seaside, back in the days when we could!

Anyway, things took a dramatic turn for the worse....Coronavirus.....The first I knew of it was when the lovely DVLA people sent us a letter. It was actually a renewal reminder for the annual car tax……another mis-heard word, it was Car Owner Virus!

Then it all started to go wrong, big style, a letter from that kind Uncle Boris at Downing Street confined me to barracks (another mis-heard word?), but he did say if I needed an MOT soon, it would be extended by 6 months. Fat lot of use that is when we're likely to be stuck here all over summer, and anyway I'm too young to know about such things.

The dream continued though, and I imagined the line-up of cars waiting at Hull ready for the adventure to start…

And not a Ferret in sight…

Off we go, over the sea and far away. They said we were going on a trip where there are lots of old dykes and ditches filled with water, floods, windmills and water pumps everywhere, well it sounded more like a trip down the Calder Valley to me, but what do I know? I'm only a car…

Now you're talking… we're abroad!

Couldn't find a windmill, so we all met up at a salt & pepper mill!

As part of the tour itinery, we were scheduled to meet up with another SCT tour that would be staying for 2 or 3 nights at the same hotel as us.

The tour details included many route plans, maps, details of places to go with all manner of interesting venues to visit. The number 1 venue on everybody's list seemed to be the Keukenhof Gardens (that's easy for you to say - don't forget I'm only a 2 year old Morgan!)

After the planned 1 week trip, we headed back towards Blighty, or at least some were intending to, whilst others were looking forward travelling on into Germany and perhaps beyond.

Finally made it... The Keukenhof Gardens... at least the pieces were falling into place!

Meanwhile, back in the garage at home, I've been pressure washed, cleaned, polished even had my front suspension greased and now I'm ready, dressed up, but with nowhere to go! Still there's always next year, or the year after.

We hope you've enjoyed this short story and that it brought a smile or two, and it just goes to show that this self-isolation is only as bad as you want to make it. Isa's quite happy sitting in the garage, alongside the Land Rover Discovery Sport, but I'm not sure that they are actually keeping 2 metres apart!

All the very best to everyone, keep your spirits up in this very trying time and look forward to years of happy, trouble free Morgan motoring ahead.

Acknowledgements and thanks to Scenic Car Tours, for the use of their documentation and rally plaque.

The "Keen Greens"

Car of The Month

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We are delighted to offer for sale this 1954 Morgan Plus 4 Drophead coupe. Once owned by Morgan designer Maurice Own and one of only five examples left still running in the UK.

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2006 70th Anniversary Model. Duck Egg Blue with Black leather. RHD. Only 11,598 miles

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Our Iberian Odyssey 2015

By Sam Macfie

At this dark time of lockdown away from Covid 19 it is good to have an excuse to revisit happier days, as provided by Sheila and Francis's plea for articles for the next newsletter. Herewith my contribution which is a recollection of the trip Chris and I took in 2015 in our Plus 4.

A Happy Occasion

Our daughter Charlotte was married to Joe, her partner of many years, on 15 May 2015. Our nearly new Plus 4 made a fine wedding car as you can see. We planned to take a break after this very happy event in the Morgan. Our destination was Iberia. The plan was to drive from Santander on the northern coast of Spain to Rocha Brava, near Carvoeiro, in the Algarve, there to spend a week in an apartment and then drive back up north to Bilbao via Portugal and North Western/Central Spain. Chris had carefully planned the itinerary in advance using Booking.com, which was very successful partly because bookings could be cancelled and new ones made without financial penalty up to the day of arrival at a destination if the need arose - which it did.

We left our home in Easingwold on 29 May, destination Portsmouth which we did in a day. We took the early ferry next morning and had a pleasant 24 hour cruise to Santander with the car well tucked away below decks. The upper car deck was open and exposed to plenty of spray so I was glad the Morgan was protected.

Palencia and the Car Lift

We arrived in Santander in the warm sunshine and set off for the relatively short drive of 200km to Palencia, a rather non-descript town that was on our route south and our first stop, to stay in the grandly named Eurostars Diana Palace. Thanks to our satnav we found the hotel easily but could find nowhere nearby to park. All the hotels we had pre-booked had car parking space but there seemed to be no possibility of a car park for this hotel which was in a large residential block. We parked several streets away and walked to the hotel and waited at reception. The place appeared to be empty with no sign of guests or staff. Having rung the bell at the desk several times we were finally greeted by a staff member. I asked about the car park and was informed it was in the basement and that there was a lift for the car accessible from the busy one lane street. Not speaking Spanish, I did not fully understand the instructions for access to the car park but thought it should not be beyond my abilities. Little did I know! I drove the car to where I was told so that I might access the lift via a door off the pavement. Of course, the door to the lift was closed and there was a high curb to mount to

get the car onto the narrow pavement in front of the door to the lift. We sat in the Morgan blocking the one-way street waiting for the lift to appear. It took five minutes for the door to open, during which time we learnt how patient a dozen Spanish drivers in a queue are and I can confidently say that answer is: not very! As soon as the door started to open, I drove the car up the high step, that was the curb, onto the pavement which was when the first hideous scrape was heard from beneath the vehicle. We then sat blocking the pavement for a couple of minutes while the door slowly opened to reveal the interior of the lift which was extremely small. I wondered whether this could really be for cars but decided I had better see if I could squeeze the Morgan in as the pedestrians were now building up on either side of us and they were about as happy with us as the drivers were. After a bit of maneuvering I managed to get the Mog into the lift and just managed to crack the car door open to get out and press the only button I could see. This resulted in a slow closure of the door of the lift and then… nothing. There was no apparent movement or sound for several minutes and we were beginning to wonder how we would summon help when the door opened and revealed that we had in fact descended undetected to the basement garage - to our great relief. We parked in one of the tight spaces and were thankful that we were not in a Range Rover. After this unlooked-for adventure we acquainted ourselves with our hotel room which was clean and well-appointed as was the hotel itself. Palencia was empty partly because it was siesta time and also because it was a Sunday. We had hoped to have our dinner early for a timely get-away for our longer drive the following morning but Spanish folk, of course, do not eat until around 10pm and nothing was open earlier. The next morning saw me inspecting the pavement and curb very carefully for access to the road from the lift without bending the exhaust. I did a quick calculation to assess what speed was required to leave the pavement and land on the road without damage. Fortunately this was achieved without agonizing metallic sounds and we were on our way to our next destination, Caceres by way of Salamanca.

A typically quiet Spanish Main Road

Caceres and the Stork Field

Most of our driving was on the main roads but they were a joy as there was so little traffic and the road surfaces were smooth. We rapidly found that the car generated much interest. Cars would overtake and drive alongside us with a throng of smiling faces, young and old, gazing in wonder at our beautiful transport of delight. After a very pleasant 400km drive we reached our hotel in the mid-afternoon. This was the Hotel Hospes Palacio Arenales just outside Caceres. After the trials of Palencia we were delighted to find that the hotel was idyllic and had a spacious underground car park that was easily accessed by a gently sloping ramp -what bliss! We tucked the car up and took a taxi into Caceres which is a fascinating medieval walled town where we spent the rest of the afternoon exploring prior to returning to the hotel. Before dinner we had a walk in the dusk. Next to the hotel was an extraordinary field of tall poles with a stalks' nest on the top of each. It was a most dramatic and unusual site with the red sky silhouetting these strange structures and their large avian occupants clapping their beaks together.

Seville and More Car Parking Woes

A new day and a new destination - Seville. On our way we stopped at a service station to fill up and get a drink. When we returned to the car there was an elegant young Spanish lady draped across the bonnet having her photograph taken. Good taste the Spanish! At a later stop a little toddler could not resist the car and ran over to inspect the car and the radiator grill in particular. We understood that Seville is a nightmare to drive in so we chose a hotel away from the centre by the river Guadalquivir, the Hotel Ribera de Triana. This is a modern pleasant hotel and as with all our stops car parking was of paramount importance. It had an underground car park which did not need a car lift for access. Navigating the one-way system to the hotel was not easy but ultimately successful. We parked outside the reception to check

in and were given instructions for parking in the car park. I drove us round to the car park entrance and started down the ramp…..screeeech! The car had bottomed out on the sudden steep slope to the basement so a quick reverse up the ramp was necessary. We unloaded all our baggage including Chris(!) and I tried again with the same result. It was clear that I was not going to be able to get the car into the car park without causing damage to the underside. I appealed to the hotel receptionist for a happy solution to my problem but she was without pity and said I would just have to use a public car park. This was exactly what I had wished to avoid but, having no choice, I drove to where I thought she had indicated but found myself in the wrong stream, heading into the centre of city. I had no wish to drive there so I managed to turn around and found a public car park on the other side of the river from the hotel. This also was underground but without such a severe ramp. Unhappily, I parked in the middle of the park and seeing a supervisor's booth at one end I went over to pay. I indicated I wanted to pay for 2 days parking and said I had a classic car, pointing to the Morgan. The attendant took one look at it and left his booth to remove some traffic cones which were reserving a private space directly in front of his booth. He told me to park there so that he and his colleagues could keep an eye on it, day and night. I was so relieved by his thoughtfulness and felt confident that the Plus 4 would still be there and intact 48 hours later. Thus we were able to enjoy an untroubled stay in Seville, visiting the beautiful Moorish palace - the Alcazar, and a meal with Flamenco dancing which was very stirring.

The Road to the Algarve and a Roasting

Sure enough when I went to retrieve the car for our next leg I found it had been well guarded. I was briefly alarmed on initial start up in the garage to note that the engine management light came on but after a few seconds it went out. I suspect it was the result of a build up of exhaust gasses in the confined space of the garage. It certainly gave no further trouble thereafter. We packed up the car and set forth for the Algarve. The weather was incredibly hot and the road out of Seville was jammed with cars which was a great surprise to us as the roads had been so quiet up to this point. It turned out that this particular day was a public holiday and all of the Sevillians were heading out to the coast. We were stationary in our car with the hood down and broiling uncomfortably under a 35 degree sun. So we raised the hood, closed the windows and switched on the air con for the first time ever. The Morgan air con is not that efficient but it was enough to cool us (especially our knees!) and we were perfectly comfortable in our little cocoon. Eventually the traffic started to move and us with it.

Crossing into Portugal we had to register the car at the border so that we would be automatically charged on toll roads of which there were many more than in Spain. We arrived at Rocha Brava for our seven day stay in the afternoon and made ourselves at home in our pleasant apartment. As a family we had enjoyed a number of holidays in the Algarve but Chris and I had not visited the area for many years. We had fond

memories of an excellent Piri-piri restaurant on the road up to Monchique and set out to see if was still there. We were hazy about its exact whereabouts but we found it without a problem and once more enjoyed a delicious meal on their warm terrace. We explored the area in the Morgan, on foot and even took an electric tuc-tuc to Sagres. It was good to have a relatively restful week before the return journey. By the time we reached the Algarve we had clocked up 1000 miles on our odyssey so being conscientious Morgan owners we sought out a garage to get the kingpins lubricated which was accomplished with success.

Buddha Eden

After our relaxing week in the Algarve was over we headed North, beyond Lisbon, for a two night stay in Caldas da Rainha at the Sana Silver Coast Hotel, in the town centre, with reasonable but public parking. On the way we had a long stop at a site Chris was very interested in seeing, Buddha Eden. This 35 hectacre park has been in construction since 2001. It was conceived as a visceral reaction by the owner to the destruction by the Taliban of the giant Buddhas of Bamyan. It is a beautiful oriental style garden with innumerable statues of Buddha. Liberally scattered around the garden are groups of Terracotta army statues as well as some eccentric eye-catching exhibits. In the centre there are water courses and a lake. When we were there work was continuing and no doubt it still is but it did not detract from the beauty of the place. The owner is a wine grower, clearly of great wealth, on whose land the park is built.

The Monastery of Alcobaca and Trouble with the Police

After a night in the hotel we set out to see a place I was very keen to visit, the Cistercian monastery of Alcobaca, some miles north of our base. As a guide at Fountains Abbey I have a great interest in monasticism, especially the Cistercians. Although Alcobaca is no longer an active monastery it has not suffered the destruction that all the English Cistercian abbeys were subject to during the reign of Henry VIII. Therefore it was wonderful to see the intact monastery as it would have been in the medieval period in all its simplicity, austerity and magnificence. A curious feature is the Baroque façade on the west face of the church which is most un-Cistercian!

After this uplifting visit, as we were driving back to Caldas da Rainha we were flagged down by the police and were confronted by a rather intimidating lady officer. She wanted to check that we were in possession of all the correct travel documentation. I have to say that I felt rather smug as I had carefully checked that I had all this in order. My smugness was premature. Firstly our passports were demanded and scrutinized without comment. Then the good lady asked for my V5 document which I duly produced. This too was examined in detail. Then she struck gold and pointing to our white Morgan she looked at the V5, which recorded the colour as being of that hue, and said "That car is not white….it is yellow". I protested at this, which I immediately realized was not a good thing to do so I allowed her to have a rant about the incorrect colour of our car. When she had finished she asked for my insurance document which I gave her. "Where is your Green Card?" she asked. I replied that I had checked with my insurance company who no longer issue these as they are not necessary. "They may not be for Spain but they are for Portugal" she countered. Finally she asked to see our ferry tickets which were in our hotel room. She was very displeased to hear this and gave me a scowl saying that we should carry them with us at all times. At this point I could see that I would likely be summonsed to attend the local police station the next day and have to pay a fine so I was greatly relieved when she gave me one last look of disgust and waved us away like naughty children.

Hotel Convento I and Alternative Reality

Back at the hotel we discussed our plans for the last few days of our holiday. Our next stop was to have been the Vintage House at Pinhao, a well-respected hostelry which we had been looking forward to staying at. However the weather forecast was for heavy rain on one day when we had a long drive so we opted to cancel our booking and looked for an alternative further along our route in Spain. We decided to stop at Hotel Convento I, near Zamora, which sounded intriguingly different. It was! We could see the hotel from miles away as it was in the middle of a plain and stood out as a large ugly square block of a building with the name of the hotel in huge letters along the roof. Arriving at the hotel it appeared utilitarian, even industrial. I went into the building to register and entered an alternative universe. The hall and reception area was dimly lit and filled with bizzare ornamentation that looked like a film set for a sinister castle. There was an altar frieze at the back of the reception desk. We registered and were conducted to our room several floors up and along a number of corridors. The whole place was decorated with elaborate portraits, elegant staircases statues and subdued lighting. One of the staff offered to show us around the building. There were several huge rooms for functions, the largest of which was a copy of the Sistine Chapel complete with frescoes and stained glass. The dining rooms of which there were several were themed - I forget what all the themes were so overwhelmed were my senses by this weird place. Before dinner we thought a walk might clear our heads. We

walked around the huge hotel building to its rear and came upon an Etruscan Temple which was something of a surprise. Opposite the Etruscan Temple was an Acropolis-like structure. The sense of unreality we experienced in the hotel now knew no bounds! There was no one in the area and no explanation of what it was all about so we explored the two temples. The Etruscan was in fact just a magnificent frontage with nothing behind. The Greek building was

complete and substantial. Feeling slightly dizzy we returned to the hotel via the car park. Chris noticed a small bird fluttering near a wing mirror on one of the vehicles and found that one of its feet was stuck under the mirror. She managed to release the bird which then sat in her palm for a couple of minutes while she checked that it was not hurt. Fortunately it was not so she put it on a branch where it started to sing. In the evening we had dinner in the Gothic Restaurant. The food was evidently Gothic in quality but the wine, which was provided without charge, was excellent. When we left next day we felt pleased to have experienced this extraordinary place but were not sure that we would want to return. Looking back, we sometimes wonder if it really existed! But it does - I have just checked its website.

Burgos and Landa

Our next overnight stage should have been another stop at the Diana Palace in Palencia but we could not face the car parking! So we cancelled and booked a hotel near Burgos, the home of El Cid. The hotel called Landa was an old castle. Our lovely room was on the top floor, beneath the crenellations, with great views all round. The swimming pool was amazing, built in Gothic style with a vaulted roof. I had a good undisturbed swim in its warm waters and enjoyed the extraordinary ambience which I was beginning to get used to by now! We ate in the restaurant which was a mistake as neither of us found anything to our taste. I just had a bowl of green veggies. We were still warmly welcomed and chatted

to by the proprietress while we ate our meal, the only diners in the restaurant. Those in the know ate at the bar which would have been a better option. It was a lovely hotel and the car was tucked away in the basement with groceries and goods for the hotel. The staff rightly felt that the Morgan should be away from the common herd of vehicles.

Home Again

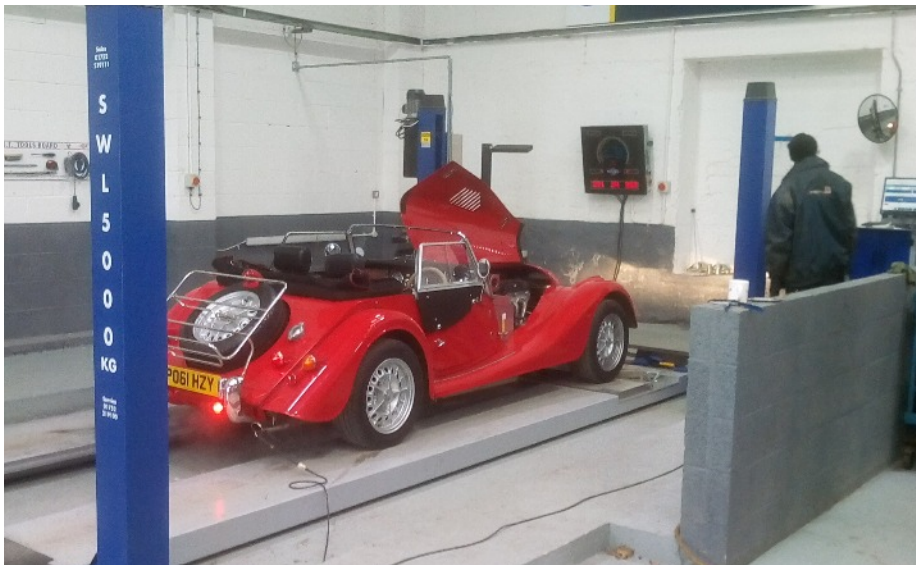
We had one more night before our return ferry trip from Bilbao. We stayed in a suburb of the city on the river and close to the port. Our return sailing was relaxed and we disembarked the next day at Plymouth and drove home in the day.

We were away for three weeks having had a great holiday and not a few adventures and surprises, which is one of the pleasures of a holiday such as this, greatly enhanced as it was by our lovely car. Apart from several underbody scrapes and a brief worry about the engine management light in Seville the car was faultless and a joy to drive on the wonderful quiet Spanish roads. The people we met were mostly friendly and helpful - with one exception! We greatly enjoyed the eccentricities of the Spanish and the Portuguese and hope to revisit Iberia in our Roadster in the next year or two if time and age permits.

The Plus 4 back home at the end of our Iberian Odyssey
a little the worse for wear!

Sam Macfie, April 7, 2020

GRANGEFIELD MOT & SERVICE CENTRE



Grangefield MOT & Service Centre
Unit 2
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Contact Steve Stead
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We carry out servicing on all makes and models, big and small. Discount on Morgan MOTs on production of current MSCC Membership card (£30.00)

Many thanks to Sue for sending us the following message and photo:

"Please find photo of Yorkshire member Graham Marris; he is a key worker and is sporting a Yorkshire mask.

Sorry to the vegetarians but he is keeping the food industry going by delivering chickens.

He may also have been the only member able to do "drive" it day" in his lorry!"

Sue Franklin

"I-spy Maurice"- or more precisely "I-spy UWB 97L"

This is the same car that was pictured next to the tank on the Spring Newsletter's back page, and that Carl and Lisa Aveyard had as their wedding car in 1993! Maurice was the 'chauffeur', and this was just ahead of Carl buying his first Mog - a 1980's 4/4 four seater.
You may also recognise a very svelte Martin (Carl's Nuts-Off co-driver)…and the other 'best man' James, dragging him out of the car to get him into the Registry Office.

Many thanks to Carl for the photos.
Has anyone else any more photos of UWB 97L in their archives?

MORGANAMIA — or the Lowdown on Naming Your Morgan

Whilst writing the Me and My Motor articles for the newsletter, it has always struck me that Morgan owners most definitely fall into two very distinct camps. Those that give their Morgans names and those who don't. Putting the question to them, most of the candidates would look at me horrified as if I was asking them their views on ladies fashion; they wriggle their eyebrows, shrug, and say no, never, why would you? The Oracle springs to mind as well as Neil Edwards, Stuart Kellet and oh, yes… my own hubby. I have tried but the Morgan has always been just plain old Morgy although she (and there's another conundrum, is the Morgan male or female?) should have been called Bella - conceived in Malvern but spent the first year of her life in Italy. Well, let me tell you that naming your car is a sign of intelligence because according to Nicholas Epley, a professor of behavioural science at the University of Chicago, people might think that anthropomorphising objects such as cars is childish or stupid, but it is part of what makes humans uniquely intelligent. We are programmed to recognise minds. So it is natural to give other things human characteristics. I like to use the names but it can cause confusion - "Oh look, there's Mortimer" as Jan drives past. You have to be careful who you're speaking to or you can get "Who's Isa, is she Swedish?" It does make you think why people give the names they do to their Morgans - Arnie, Mortimer and Jeeves - all Jan's cars are boys. Russ's car is Barbara, John's car is Molly, the keen Greens have an Isa, Stewart Elderkin has had Betsy One and Betsy Two, Tony has Henrietta and over the years I've come across quite a few Millies. There's even a yellow Morgan called Bumble buzzing around (sorry). I know it's all a bit Chitty Chitty Bang Bang but most Morgan owners, particularly the ones who have had their cars a very long time, say "The Morgan is part of the family, we would never sell it." So, folks, if they're part of the family why not give them a name? And if you had given them a name, perhaps you would recall their characteristics a bit better - like Prudence was totally reliable, Mandy was fast but unpredictable, like a surface-to-air missile. Minxie, Phew, she was smoking hot - just about scrambled away before she exploded on the hard shoulder. I will have to disagree with Jan though on the sex of the cars - most definitely female in my eyes - although I do concede Arnie is VERY masculine looking (well he is named after Arnold Schwarzenegger after all). If your Morgan does not have a name, is it an "It", and therefore does not have a sex? If you were clever enough to name your car you'd know that's not true. Time to get the champers out and christen your Morgan.

Sheila

A blast from the past - Maurice Denton's Plus 4 at the 1979 Yorkshire Weekend, Redmires. - Have you got a blast from the past worthy of the back page?

Next Issue: July-August