

## Chairman's Report

This report summarises the progress and advances over the last 12 months. It also gives us the opportunity to understand and appreciate the achievements of my fellow volunteer Officers. The AGM gives us a rare chance to put faces to names and so I would request Officers to stand up and face the audience when their names are mentioned.

A year ago in my acceptance speech I said that I would give leadership and set the tone. I wanted to steer the Club in a positive, forward thinking direction bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm. The attendance today is testament to that change and I hope it proves to be a memorable and pleasurable weekend for you all. My vision throughout has been to focus on our objectives which are to encourage the restoration and enjoyment of Morgan Three-Wheelers. The Club faces some real challenges both in the short and longer term. My role has been to identify the gaps and constructively bridge them wherever possible through the Officers and with the committee making the decisions.

The ageing demography of our membership is an obvious problem. We need to make an environment that is sympathetic and friendly towards young people and to recognise the degree to which families bring support, balance and atmosphere to the Club. Encouragement of the young with their excitement, enthusiasm and optimism will help secure our future. One of the first things to establish was our Child Protection Policy which was drafted for us by Lesley Reynolds who is now our designated contact.

A major blow to prospective young drivers of three wheelers was the EU directive forcing them to be motorcyclists and over 25 years of age. An EU derogation has brought the age limit down to 21 and a motorcycle test is no longer required. The derogation only applies within a nation's borders but is one step in the right direction. We are indebted to Trevor Seymour, John Chatwin, and particularly Stuart Tallack who have fought so hard for this.

Our ageing membership has a wealth of knowledge and experience that needs to be passed down the generations and throughout the membership in general. The Club's first Training Day provided the opportunity, in a relaxed and family friendly atmosphere, to expand knowledge, gain confidence and inspire the maintenance and use of Morgans. As well as being good value to the participants, it was cost neutral to the Club. My thanks to all the tutors, the owners who lent their cars, the marshals, check-in ladies and cameraman Richard Atherton. The film world premier will be at the dinner this evening.

Another popular event was the Club Opening Run at RAF Cosford. Organisers on this occasion were Malcolm Lamb and Bob Derricott. Thank you both. We had an excellent turnout of cars and members included Sam Savage with his Penny Farthing offering free rides or falls for those brave enough to try it. Charles Smith has volunteered to organise next year's Opening Run.

The Club Sprint at Curborough was a superb and safe day of motor sport with many first time competitors and included four 5 speeders. There was an unexpectedly high turnout of spectators. The logistics of staging our own event are considerable but the efficient team led by Competition Secretary Pete Clews and his wife Sue did a faultless job. Congratulations to all the competitors and our gratitude to all who made the day possible. The Sporting Section is an important and integral part of the Club. It has attracted many into the world of Morgan three wheelers including myself. Anyone can become involved and participate as a competitor, marshal, spectator or supporter. Pete Clews is to be congratulated on gaining the acceptance of 5 speeders in sprint and hill climb events. As Comp Sec, Pete is indefatigable; organising an unbelievably full programme of race meetings, hill climbs, sprints and social activities.

Unfortunately no one came forward to run the Night Trial over the past winter but in keeping with the current Club turn around in fortunes, Dave and Danny Hodgson will be organising one on the Yorks/Lancs borders on November 22/23<sup>rd</sup>.

One operation that is vital and of practical importance to members is Mogspares. Grahame Joseph took over the job of Mogspares Coordinator from Oliver Brooke almost six years ago and is retiring today but will remain onboard. Throughout his tenure, Grahame has led the team to considerable success and his careful management has enabled record levels of quality parts. Mogspares comprises of a diverse team with 14 volunteers. Their effort and generosity should not be taken for granted. Peter Faulkner's resignation last year, as Head of the Technical Panel, highlighted the difficulty of finding replacement volunteers with such expertise, facilities and time. A special mention of thanks also goes to Design Engineer Bob Haynes who retired earlier in the year after 40 years of exceptional service. We are fortunate and extremely grateful for the continued use of his drawings.

Another Officer retiring today is John Barker who has successfully run Regalia for five years and is looking forward to getting some of his house back. There is potential within Regalia for online shopping and it is hoped the new Regalia Secretary will be able to exploit this. Ian and Maria Parkinson were also selling Regalia at the Morgan Motor Company events at Shelsley Walsh and Pickersleigh Road and again at our Training Day. These events generated much publicity for the Club. We have also had several articles published in MogMag and requests for cars in TV and film work. Richard and Penny Atherton have been working with Ian and Maria on Club promotion. Martyn Webb was responsible for gathering together the collection of cars for the 100 years at Pickersleigh Road celebrations. My thanks to them all.

As one would expect from a librarian, Pete Thompson has been quietly getting on with his job. He looks after the records but has also been meticulously cleaning up old drawings. Nearly 250 scanned documents are now available on the website and since their introduction this year, there have been a staggering 2000 downloads.

Working closely with the Librarian is the Club Registrar Steve Lister who tracks down and answers historical requests and deals with registration issues. He is well used to multi tasking as he also administers the many Club Trophies, which in itself is a huge undertaking.

The website goes from strength to strength thanks to the diligence of Steve Uprichard. He keeps it right up to date with Club news, activity, sporting results and photographs normally within a couple of days. It contains an abundance of information and the technology that goes with it is bringing about a transformation in how we do business. An example was the online booking form for the Training Day. Participants only had to click on the poster to get the form, which on completion, then came straight through to me. Payment could also be made online quickly and easily for both the participant and for the Treasurer. The technology does not preclude conventional methods and disadvantages no one. The website is public with a Members only section. 760 members are registered of which 300 subscribe to the monthly newsletter.

I would like to thank past Bulletin editor John Chatwin for his 27 issues. John resigned in February and we welcomed back Nick Taylor together with V Twin and a certain lady correspondent from North Wales. The Bulletin is a true reflection of our Club with balance, humour, news and a mix of technical and the nostalgic. It is a professional publication and now comes in full colour. Assisting is a team with Doug Forbes doing the Group Reports and advertising, Grahame Joseph the cover, Pete Thompson proof reading and regular contributing photographers Denis Rushton and Don Stringer. My thanks to them all but particularly to Nick for not only coming back in our hour of need but for doing such a brilliant job.

Our Technical Advisors: Chris Booth, Bob Angell and Colin Harris have been answering queries and David Browne continues to provide an excellent service to members with used parts.

Thanks also to Ross Herbert who has been looking after the Gerald Carr F4 which is available for members to borrow. It now has a trailer for those from further afield and I would encourage members to make use of this opportunity.

I will now come onto the important administrative roles in the Club starting with the Club Secretary Chris Harfield. Chris had never been to a CCM before his appointment last year but has carried out his duties honourably and well. It is a difficult job and some of the circumstances this year have not made it any easier. He has been a great support and help to me as the Chairman.

The Company Secretary Andrew Morison was co opted by the Directors last December. He is invaluable when it comes to putting complicated bureaucratic jargon into simple language.

The Treasurer's job has a large degree of responsibility. John Scruton works with seemingly effortless efficiency which is a sign of competence. He is always right up to date and knows exactly the state of our finances at any given moment. The committee are to be commended in helping to keep costs down. Some committee members generously do not claim travel expenses to meetings. Others car share whenever possible. On two occasions during the past year, committee meetings have been linked to other Club events not only to save mileage claims but also to save many hours of travelling time. Further savings were made at the Training Day when the marquees and the PA equipment were sponsored.

At last year's AGM the committee were asked to seek a better use of the Leavens Fund. The generous bequest in 1990 included 3 Morgan three wheelers, a Morgan drophead coupe and a memorabilia collection. The cars were sold and the majority of the money went into the bank. The £30k that is left today would hardly buy a three wheeler in running condition. We must be much more creative in the ways that we use the Leavens Fund for the benefit of all members. If we don't, it will just sit there and continue to be eroded by inflation – hardly what John and Bridget would have wanted. I therefore looked through our accounts to see where we might be able to use the money wisely. For several years we have been hiring timing equipment for the Club Sprint at £500 per meeting. Having our own equipment gives us the opportunity to run additional sprints, the traffic light system can be used for future training days and we can hire it out to other clubs thereby bringing returns which will top up the fund. All ideas are welcome.

The 8% fall in membership reported last year, was a major concern. This level of decline is unsustainable. The figures have now recovered thanks to a combined effort on several fronts. First and foremost is a general feeling that, with changes, the Club is running well. Lapsed members and late payers were chased up by David Browne. Club publicity material goes into every welcome pack as new cars leave the factory. Up until now, Membership Secretary Eric Bayley has faced a mountain running an almost completely manual method for renewals. Steve Uprichard has been instrumental in modifying it to a more automated, computerised system which will be far more efficient and reduce errors. It will also be quicker and easier for the member to renew. The new system is complicated in design because it has to dovetail with our membership lists, printers, postal service and banking. You can all help by moving your subscriptions to the new Standing Order facility. Howard Joseph who has revolutionised Mogspares records with his spreadsheets has been responsible for the computer programming.

At local level several groups have flourished with their programmes of events, camaraderie and mutual support. This year we have a new group formed in the Bedfordshire area.

I now wish to clear up any misunderstanding over the AGM date. One of the first volunteers to put their hand up on my appointment was Richard Atherton, our very keen and enthusiastic AGM organiser. At my

first CCM on December 1<sup>st</sup>, a problem was raised regarding a clash with the race meeting at Cadwell Park which is a round in our MTWC Challenge Series. This would have meant a significant section of our Club missing the AGM including some Officers and the Club Secretary who would be unable to write the minutes. The problem could not be solved at that CCM for two reasons. Firstly we did not know if any alternative dates or venues would be available and secondly there had been no consultation with the membership. Richard Atherton was asked to investigate venues and dates and the GOs were asked to discuss at their meetings and report back. The only alternative date available at the Abbey Hotel was this weekend and Richard was able to pencil in a second booking. After two months the Abbey Hotel insisted we make up our minds and cancel one of the bookings. As neither the Secretary nor I had received a single response from the GOs, I advised Richard to cancel the September date. At the February CCM, I made it very clear that if the committee wished to go back to the September date, it could be done but there was no guarantee that we would be able to secure the same room allocation or facilities such as the Elgar suite for the Spares Fair or Annual Dinner. The CCM voted and took the decision to hold the AGM on this date.

At my first CCM it was also mentioned that the Morgan Motor Company would be happy to meet the new Chairman. An informal introductory meeting was held at the factory in late January with Managing Director Steve Morris and Sales Director Mark Ledington. I was accompanied by the secretary, the treasurer and Richard Atherton. We discussed cooperation and very generously the factory offered us free use of their facilities for this meeting which are normally charged at £30 per delegate. In addition we were offered free factory tours normally at £12.50 per head, the use of two 5 speeder demonstrator cars, entry to the museum, the cafe and shop. At the CCM in February, this generous offer and the revised format were discussed, voted and accepted. The response we see here today clearly vindicates the committee's decision. It has been a huge task for Richard Atherton who continues to smile his way through all the arrangements. These include the graphics for the invitation cards, tickets, room bookings, hotel arrangements, MMC liaison, factory tours, 5 speeder drives (now 6 cars to satisfy demand), our annual dinner organisation and entertainment. I would also like to thank Gary Caroline for volunteering to run the Spares Fair which we can look forward to tomorrow.

Throughout my tenure I have tried to pull the Club together. Whatever your interest; be it engineering, driving, touring, racing or just social, this is all the same Club. I have been determined to make it inclusive. We need to do more to include wives, partners and children. We should include the factory from which our cars came and we need to reach out to the members we have never seen. I have done what I can to involve and connect with the membership by communicating in an open, honest and direct way. The Club has been turned around and the results are there for all to see.

There is just one final "thank you" and that is to all the ladies who have supported and assisted Officers of this Club particularly my wife Jane who has been very tolerant.