



FolkMog News



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A small change to the layout of FolkMog News; you will find the 'Forthcoming Events' panel on page 2 which allows all events to be on the same panel rather than spread over two pages.

Mike Abbott has recently returned from a visit to South Africa with his +8, 3 other Morgans and a Rolls Royce. He e-mailed Maurice a report of his time there and has kindly allowed us to include it in this edition of FolkMog News.

Stratton Motors of Long Stratton are our local Morgan Agents for Norfolk and Suffolk. They tell us that they are now concentrating solely on three makes of Sports Cars (Aston Martin, Lotus and Morgan) having ceased to sell new Ford cars. Their Morgan Sales Manager Guy Munday, has invited local MSCC members to attend an Open Evening for the launch of the new V6 Roadster in June/July when they have a demonstrator car delivered. Date will be confirmed by Maurice as soon as possible.

Recent Events

Excellent attendance numbers again at recent FolkMog lunches. In January 40 members with no less than 17 Morgans made it to 'Not the Christmas Lunch' in Swaffham, 33 with 12 Morgans, including one F4 3-wheeler, were at Burgh Castle in February and 29 enjoyed lunch at The Gardener's Arms, Moats Tye near Stowmarket in March.

French trip latest

Classic Car Tours have provided David Henry with two scenic runs, one from Mortain, one from Josselin. Routes will be handed out to participants when we arrive in Mortain.

FolkMog Treasure Hunt

The FolkMog Treasure Hunt will take place on 9th May. We meet between Noon and 12.30 at Stimpson's Piece Community Centre, Reepham, for a buffet lunch, and we will return there for the prize giving later in the day. Many thanks in advance to Jan and Dave Henry for all their work in organising this event for us. It should be an enjoyable afternoon driving and walking around some of Norfolk's attractive byways. Jan and Dave do need numbers in advance so if you are attending please let them know on 01603 870438 or by e-mail to hyren@freeuk.com.

Mogs under the Southern Cross *by Mike Abbott*

What was it like? Did I enjoy myself? Any incidents? My opinion of the RSA? Well, where do I start?

At the beginning, I suppose. At London Heathrow, after much begging and grovelling, I was upgraded; "To give you some leg room, sir." Yummy; a 12 hour flight in comfort. First time in my life I've been upgraded into Business Class. It set the tone for the whole trip. Arrived at Cape Town to find the cars all ready sitting in a huge warehouse, dirty, but unmarked; thank Gawd! Out onto the South African road in bright sunlight at around 25 degrees for a 30 mile drive to Strand for a 6 night stay beside the sea.

Most days the Morgans drove into Cape Town where we were lucky enough to get a clear, and windless, day to enable us to swing up to Table Mountain on the cable car. We also enjoyed the waterfront restaurants and afternoon teas at the posh Mount Nelson hotel. Visited Cape Point (the most southerly point of Africa). Got chased away by a troop of Baboons whose Alpha Male decided his position was to be 'King-of-the-castle' by sitting on the roof of any car whose owner was foolish enough to leave it unattended. As we didn't have any roofs to speak of we 'drifted' away smartly. On the way back we took the opportunity to have a 'real' Mog drive along the coastal Chapman's route which

now is indelibly stuck in all our memories as what sports car motoring is all about with a blue, blue sea crashing onto the rocks below the winding smooth road which has been cut out of the mountain. While in the Cape area we visited the winelands where the different vineyards competed with each other to offer sumptuous restaurants - most of which we all sampled.

A concert at the open-air Kerstenbosch natural amphitheatre was a wonderful experience with 5000 people all sitting on the grass hill with picnics of various SA goodies and SA wine listening to an SA swing band. After the concert the column of Morgans were given priority over all the traffic to drive away into the twilight on a balmy evening.

Then the first REAL highlight of the trip: "I've arranged with a friend to give anybody who's interested a ride in his Tiger Moth. Anybody interested?", said Simon, one of the travelling organisers. "Cor, bleedin' right, I'm up for that," shouted Abbott. The day came and I was strapped into the cockpit of a bright yellow, 1937 Tiger Moth, forced into a veeeeery tight leather helmet (I can't help having a big head) and a pair of Mk 4 goggles. "Aerobatics or a straight flight?" I was asked over the intercom by the pilot sitting behind me. "Full aerobatics please," I said, with more bravado than sense.

We droned over the beauty of the Southern Cape and then the tinny, nasal voice came into my earphones, "I'm going to loop the aircraft over, are you ready?" "Ready" I replied, not really knowing what was coming. The next moment I was staring through the sheen of the propeller at the green landscape of the wine growing area of the Cape with the altimeter unwinding at an alarming rate and the engine building up to a scream when suddenly an almighty wallop into the 'family jewels' was the signal to me that the joystick had been yanked back into my nether regions and the ground disappeared and the blue sky swept over me and I was hanging upside down with my camera floating on its strap in front of me. Then all was back to normal and I was being spoken to: "Did you enjoy that?" said the sadist behind me. "Yeah, terrific." "Want to do it again." Now this was a problem. I was still waiting for my stomach to catch up, but how could I say no? "yeah, go for it." This time I jammed the camera into my webbing belts and forced my head back against the seat. Woah! Here we go again, mottled green fields rushing up to meet me and that awful lurch as the aircraft was pulled up (slamming the tender parts again) and over with an upside down view of the horizon followed by the relative calm of level flight again. If that wasn't enough; "I think you'll like this" came that tinny voice again and we were rushing toward the saw-tooth mountain top where our shadow was rearing up and down alongside us as we veered between the crags. Just another 20 minutes of this and we were skidding into the landing approach and bumping along the grass runway. I'd survived.

Off now from the calm of the Cape and into the Drakensberg Mountains to meet the animal life. The Addo Elephant park was interesting: lots of antelope and, of course, jumbos. This was to be our lot for the next 2 - 3 weeks: game drives and armed ranger escorted walks and close encounters with the 'Big Five', i.e., Lion; Cape Buffalo; Leopard; Elephant; Rhinoceros. Meeting any of the 'five' in a low Morgan with a roof of thin vinyl was quite disconcerting. One encounter with a bull elephant who was in musk and had lively ears caused 4 Morgans and a Rolls Royce to all find their reverse gears with alacrity.

In a seemingly minor incident to the outsider a six inch spider running around the cockpit of my +8 caused an evacuation of the Morgan quicker than it was designed for with resulting bruised legs. It took a reasonable sized rock to allow the arachnophobia to be assuaged.

Lesotho was visited by only some of our party; some heard about the rigours of the Sani pass and elected to stay behind. They were well advised: it was not only a test for the 4 wheel drives, but for everybody's backsides and spines. Climbing up into the clouds over boulders which were scraping along the underside of the tank I was sitting in was quite exciting when you looked to the side and saw the sheer drops within a few centimetres of the scrabbling tyres. The border post appeared out of the mist where a herd of Angora goats were being shepherded by three young men in the

Forthcoming Events

April

Easter Mon. 12th Apr.

First round of the Morgan Motor Company Challenge series, Snetterton

Fri 23rd – Wed 28th Apr.

FolkMog long weekend in France

May

Sun 9th May.

FolkMog Treasure Hunt., Reepham. Arrive between Noon and 12.30. See text. OS sheet 133 Ref. 100234

Mon 31st May

We have been invited by 4/4 owner Rob Hayward to display our cars at the Happisburgh Fete. Contact Maurice for details.

June

Tues 22nd June.

*From 7.30 pm. Noggin at the Chequers Inn, Thompson. 3 miles south of Watton
OS sheet 156 Ref. 284857*

July

Tues. 6th July.

*From 7.00 pm. Dunstan Hall. ANCC Classic Car meet.. On A140 just south of Norwich.
OS sheet 134 Ref. 223026*

Sun 11th July.

Houghton Hall picnic and visit. Details to be confirmed – watch Miscellany centre report.

August

Sun 8th Aug.

First Peter Morgan Memorial Race Meeting, Mallory Park, Leicestershire. Details in Miscellany.

Sun 15th Aug.

FolkMog Gymkhana, Old Buckenham airfield. Details to be confirmed – watch Miscellany centre report.

customary poncho type blankets of the Besothans and held in a pen where the Lesotho 'Customs' were inspecting them! We had our passports stamped and we were off to a typical Lesotho village to be given a sample of bread and beer in a Lesotho village 'rondavel'.

After lunch at the back-packer's hostel we were off, this time downhill. Not a very inviting task! The cloud had come in heavier and the 4WDs were struggling over rocks and rushing streams. We got back to our hotel feeling as if we'd been on an expedition with Ranulph Fiennes!

The Kruger was next with a wonderful lodge where I stayed in an individual rondavel with a balcony looking directly down upon the Oliphant river with a family of Hippo frolicking in a turgid tributary of the main river just below my accommodation. An early morning walk down to some rapids with a couple of armed rangers where hippo and crocodile were reputed to be was quite a test of my fitness. Thank goodness a quick exit wasn't called for. The Kruger was left behind and it was onto Swaziland for a night in Mbanebane. Lovely countryside and after the restrictions of being in a Game Park it was a relief to be able to put the top down and feel the cool breeze in the mountains around the back of my neck.

The St Lucia Wetlands was next where it was more like the Windies with its tropical humidity and lush undergrowth. Beautiful area. Took the opportunity to take a stab at cheating death in the second highlight of the tour: went sky-diving over the Durban coast with the Indian Ocean and its shark population waiting to receive me if the wind changed direction! After an hours instruction I was trussed up like a chicken, bundled into a Cessna with two professional sky-divers, taken to 2 miles above the ground and thrown out strapped to one of them and the other flying alongside taking pictures of my attempts to defy gravity by spreading all my extremities as wide as I could. After what seemed to be a couple days of being in a wind tunnel and being pummelled by a wind (I was later informed) of 132 mph, it was in fact just 35 seconds @ 1000 feet per 5 seconds, I was once again (remember the joystick in the Tiger Moth) banged in the nuptials as the rip cord was pulled with 4000 feet of space left before I would have met my Maker and former members of my family and the roar was replaced with utter silence and an opportunity to take in the double benefit of knowing I was going to survive and a wondrous view of the beauty that was Africa and the Indian Ocean spinning around the bottom of my dangling legs. The ground finally rushed up at an alarming speed which was suddenly arrested and 'phew' I was sitting on red soil and being congratulated by strangers all round me. Wonder what the Grandkids are gonna think.

Off to Ballito now with a stay for 3 days at a seaside resort, but with the humidity rising. The last couple of nights are spent in Durban, a city with a very wide ethnic variance and the worse driving experienced in SA. Dropped the 4 Morgans and the Rolls off at the warehouse where we were assured our 'babies' would be looked after.....as 'babies'. Jo'burg airport is abysmally organised (like a lot of SA) and it was into the SAA Jumbo jet without a chance of pleading for a seat with a bit of space for these old paratroopers legs. 12 hours of purgatory followed (stood for 2 hours and then attempted to settle down in the toilet where there was a bit of leg-room but still couldn't doze off). Arrived in London's Heathrow on time at 06.30 to a misty, grey day of 3 degrees and it was all over. Fingers crossed the cars come home from their sea voyage round the Cape unscathed.

Enjoyed it very much. SA is greener than I expected and more varied beauty than any country I've been to. As you can imagine this is only something like a very abbreviated report of the 42 days. There are 6 x 36 shot films sent away for processing and 5 hours of video still to be edited.

Thanks Mike. I'd love to do that one day, maybe without the skydiving; I never could understand why people jump out of perfectly serviceable aeroplanes!.

One final note. If any of you who receive this by post no longer wish to receive it, or have an e-mail address we could send it to instead, please let me know as it would save us paper, ink and postage. Thanks. I hope you all enjoy this copy of FolkMog News. See you soon.

Roger