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# SOUTHERN FOURS AND EIGHTS

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Newsletter of the Southern Morgan Group MOGSouth Vol. 4/97

## Sisson's and Olson's Trikes Race in Pittsburgh

by FRED SISSON

Pete Olson talked me into another adventure. If I had known him in high school, mom would not have let me hang out with him. The event was the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, run on ordinary roads around Schenley Park. I'm not sure how it all came about, but somehow Pete got us invited to run our trikes in the prewar class. How can you pass up an invite?

This turned out to be a MOGSouth event. Bob and Wynell Bruce let us use their car trailer, which just held the two trikes. Dave Bondon lent us his canopy. Morgan Bondon lent Pete his driving suit. Lance Lipscomb and Randy Johnson joined us, sharing the gas expense for the tow car (we used over 200 gallons on the trip!) and helping in a thousand other ways.

We only lit the tow car on fire twice on the trip up- once when Pete decided to pour oil onto the hot exhaust manifold and once when the brakes got a bit hot (read- LOTS of smoke) while descending a hill in Pittsburgh.

The racing experience was awesome. There we were, racing through city streets along with a hand-picked group of the great cars in history. How often do you get to race against a Bugatti or a Bentley or a BMW 328 or a Jag SS-100 or a Railton? While no prize is given for "first place", these guys do run fast.

Somehow I was credited for the fastest time in practice. The grid sheet had me on the pole and said that I had broken the

track record for the prewar cars! I don't think so... Either they timed my hottest perfect lap (don't remember that one...) or they dropped 10 seconds to a minute off my time. Maybe they timed two trikes.

As this was my first race in the trike, I opted to start the race in the middle of the pack rather than from pole position. The thought of having those huge cars behind me was a bit unnerving. As it turned out, the Railton was in front of me and the Bentley beside me. The Bentley driver's butt was higher than my head.

The race is kind of a blurred memory. I beat the Bentley to the chicane and left him. I dove under the Railton in the first hairpin and left him. I had a great dice with an MG (what was he doing there?). I passed him by mutual consent and his engine went off song. I never saw him again. Then it seemed that I was all alone for a while. No one passed me that I remember. I finally lapped Dave Elcomb's '32 SS JAP, Carlton Shriver's '36 4/4, and a Dellow- then it was over.

A week later I was at the Indy Racing League race at Charlotte Motor Speedway and got to thinking about thrills. Driving the latest high-tech cars 200 mph on a super speedway must be thrilling. However, driving a 60 year-old car at 100 mph, on three 18X4.50 tyres, through city streets... is pretty thrilling in itself.

*The National Geographic Explorer filmed the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix for a program to be aired on Sunday night, October 5 on TBS. Be sure to tune in and set your VCRs.*

### **Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix**

by RANDY JOHNSON

**T**he weekend of July 19th and 20th were the dates of the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pete Olson, Fred Sisson, Lance Lipscomb and myself left Fred's house at 6:00AM Thursday, July 17 with both Fred's '38 and Pete's '32 Trikes safely ensconced in the Bruce's trailer for the over 700 mile drive to Pittsburgh. We arrived safely and uneventfully about 8:00PM that night and enjoyed a leisurely dinner and early evening as we wanted to be at Schenley Park early Friday morning to stake out our paddock location.

We arrived at the park before 9:00AM and located a great level spot under some large, shady hardwood trees. After the third try we were able to correctly assemble Super Dave Bondon's canopy (no instructions included) and had our paddock area looking quite racy.

Our son Adam arrived for the weekend mid-afternoon Friday from Harrisonburg, Virginia and he bunked in with Lance and I. Friday afternoon brought some strong thunderstorms but the canopy survived the wind and rain and the balance of the weekend we had wonderful weather.

We arrived early Saturday morning as track orientation was scheduled for 9:00AM but due to clean up of the course, was delayed until about 10:30. During Friday evening Dave Elcomb, his wife Scooter and son Doug arrived from Kingsville, Ontario with Dave's '32 trike and Doug's Dreossi, a purpose built, one off Canadian formula race car built in 1961 and constructed from many bits, including the body from an F86 Saber Jet external fuel tank. We had met the

Elcomb's at the Meadow Brook Historic Races several years ago and they are great people and we really enjoyed sharing our paddock with them.

The trikes raced in the pre-war class and it was quite a sight with two Bugattis, a BMW 328, Jaguar SS-100, several Ford Model T powered open wheel dirt track cars, two Crosley powered 3/4 midgets, a Dellow, a Railton and several other cars that I cannot name. Saturday was practice and qualifying and the trikes did very well.

Morgan Bondon, Super Dave, and Morgan's friends Cassie and Gavin came by and spent the afternoon with us and it was good to have a friendly cheering section. We only wondered where Super Dave was when we were trying to erect the canopy? Saturday was again a quiet night as there was a driver's meeting at 7:30AM Sunday and practice at 8:30.

The race was scheduled for 1:00PM on Sunday and went off on time. Fred and Pete were gridded in about the middle of the pack and got off to a good start. Unfortunately Pete had to retire after three laps with a timing problem but he said he had a great time. Fred did very well in finishing seventh, passing several cars in the process, including Carlton Shriver's '38(?) Flat Rad 4/4. (Fred says "Who needs four wheels?").

This is a great event, held in beautiful Schenley Park near the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie-Mellon and is a tremendous social event in Pittsburgh as well as a tremendous fund raiser for several local charities. In conjunction with the race, on Saturday are car shows for all kinds of cars, British, Italian, German, American, etc., and the picnic spreads on Sunday are something to see.

The five of us packed up on Sunday afternoon, both cars and drivers in one piece and returned to the hotel for a shower and nice dinner. We left for home (and Adam to see his girlfriend in upstate New York) at 5:00AM Monday morning and arrived back at Fred's about 6:30PM Monday night.

What a great trip!

## MCCDC MOG 27

by SARAH POWELL

**H**arper's Ferry, West Virginia, was again the setting for the annual gathering of Morgans sponsored by MCCDC from July 2nd through the 5th. The lovely mountains, historic town, picturesque Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers and lots of Morgans and Morgan people are ingredients that are hard to beat.

MOGSouth had a respectable representation with the Braunsteins, the Bondons, the Steeles, Homer Deakins, Nancilee Kelly, the Kings and the Powells. Tom Perkins, whose '65 +4 roadster won best in show at the concours, is from Nashville and we hope will soon be a MOGSouther.

Registration was a haphazard affair, but 70+ people were on the roster and there were probably between 40 and 50 cars, though, of course not every car participated in every event. The socializing, both at the events and in the parking lot and in and around the hotel, both organized and spontaneous, were the highlights of MOG 27, for, as in so many things, the cars are nice to see, but the people are what make everything so special. A special treat for us was getting to spend time with Jim Baker, of badgemaking renown, who had brought his family from England for the occasion. Thursday, July 3rd, was Concours day. The site was Gathland State Park, Maryland, about 11 miles from the hotel. Unfortunately the park ranger would not allow any cars on the grass, so the concours was held in the sweltering parking lot. Spectators grabbed any spot of shade available and blessed those who were willing to brave the heat to judge the 35 or so cars that had entered. There was some confusion about how the classes were divided and which cars were competing against whom, but it all got sussed out in the end, as our English friends would say. The park was lovely, with the ruins of old buildings and a unique memorial arch to war correspondents. The Appalachian Trail

runs across the property, and the MOG folks were as intrigued with the hikers as the hikers were with the Morgans. A late afternoon cookout brought the event to a close.

The rally got off to a rather shaky start on Friday morning as instructions on the self-start changed minute by minute, but the route led along the river through lovely hills and picturesque towns. Everything was going along smoothly until two consecutive sets of instructions were first, misleading, then reversed. We drove up to one intersection only to see Morgans going in all possible directions. Most folks simply gave up and went on to Cantab Motors (which we all fortunately knew where the rally was to end). A few others, who were familiar with the area, used logic to get back on course, and several others (us among them) gave up, then happened to see the course marker further along the way, and ended up back on track. (An hour's rally took about three!?!)

Unfortunately, family obligations necessitated our early departure on Saturday morning, but the autocross and gymkhana were scheduled for Summit Point, which last year was an outstanding site, though there was some confusion about starting times, etc., even as we left. A closing banquet was scheduled for Saturday evening.

Even though things were not as "together" as they should have been, it was fun to renew acquaintances with friends, get to know some new folks, compare war stories on restorations, appreciate the skill, knowledge and sheer helpfulness of Morgan people, wander along historic streets, find good restaurants and great people to enjoy them with... in short, have a Morgan good time.

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## MOG 27 REFLECTIONS

by MORGAN BONDON

**I** realized one thing when I returned from MOG 27 at Harpers Ferry on Sunday... I was tired! As I was



driving home in my Morgan, something I had dreamed of for many years, I started reflecting on the weekend activities and the people surrounding them.

The most vivid recollection was seeing my long lost twin sister, Morgana, appear at the Morgan Fashion Show in a rather stunning green dress. I was a little surprised on how much hair was on her chest but I decided it was the nineties and people are different.

That lead me to my next conclusion... a large majority of the people have been attending this event over three decades! Every year we sit around a keg, or two, or three and discuss the "old" times we all had together. Legs contests, dart tournaments, midnight madness and an occasional lobster race (I feel sorry for the people who end up eating those suckers!).

My conclusion... anything that has lasted 27 years - my, am I getting old - with a similar format has tremendous dedication from the participants. Out hearts and our Morgans continue to bring us back each year to enjoy old friends and make new memories.

In the discussions I had with many people, there seemed to be a sense of troubled urgency. We had roughly 40 cars and 120 people attend this year. We had a great time, but I'm sure most of us remember the 100 car days with so many people you couldn't find a restaurant to fit all your "friends".

To me this means that the other Morgan groups around the U.S. have become much stronger. Having now attended and belonged to three groups, I can attest to this. The July 4th meet symbolizes the celebration of all of us taking the time from our day to day activity and forgetting about what we do for a living, where we live and what "other" car we drive. We bring our families, old Morgan T-shirts that are too small - OOP's - I mean have shrunk! - and realize the spirit of Morganeering.

The spirit is not where you finish in the concours, if you get lost on the rally - I have not completed a rally in 15 years - or how many water cups you crush with your car, it's seeing people's facial

expression as they complete the autocross for the first time. Or, realizing that every Morgan breaks down. And yes, Scott's hair gets longer every year!

My personal goal is to help us have 75 cars and 200 people at next year's event. I am volunteering myself to assist in the planning and coordination of MOG 28. We all have had ideas and suggestions on how to continue this tradition, I want to help take action on these ideas and make sure we keep coming back for another 27 years! The autocross, concours, rally and gymkhana are great traditions. My personal endeavors will be in the area of the social activities surrounding these core events. Let me hear your suggestions!

I WILL see you ALL at MOG 28! For someone who had their own Morgan at the event for the first time, it was all I expected it to be ... and more!

Morgan and "Morgana" Bondon  
412 343-3330 (H)  
361 Jonquil Place  
Pittsburgh, PA 15288

I do travel a lot, feel free to write or leave a message with a number and a time to call.

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### Bruces Visit Mainland

**B**ob and Wynell Bruce, long time MOGSouth members paid a visit to the mainland the end of May and the first several weeks of June. They were here to attend a family reunion in Mobile, Alabama but spent most of their time in Atlanta staying with friends Wayne and Fran Mitsch.

For the last five years Bob and Wynell have been living on their sailboat, Red Sky in the Caribbean and have now settled in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. Bob has done some flying, also ferried boats, managed a restaurant and is now selling jewelry. Wynell is working at a mailing service. They say that working in paradise is "still working". They are both doing well and do plan to return to the States at some time in the future, but at this time no date is set. It was great

seeing and talking to them about their experiences but they did have some harrowing stories about riding out Hurricane Marilyn last year. That seems like an experience you would not want to go through. We all miss them and look forward to the day they will return.

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## 1997 Fall Meet Details

*As of this writing I have received very few confirmations of those planning to attend the Fall Meet. We need this information to plan the meals for Friday and Saturday nights. Please complete the form found elsewhere in this issue or call me with your reservation confirmation. Thank you.*

**T**he MOGSouth Fall Meet for 1997 will be held September 5, 6 and 7 in and around the Clayton, Georgia area in the beautiful mountains of Northeast Georgia.

Charlie and Maidie Williams are organizing the meet and have made arrangements for us to stay at a great Bed and Breakfast, the English Manor Inns. English Manor Inns is located approximately two miles east of Clayton on U.S. Highway 76. There are seven buildings on 7.2 acres with a total of 43 rooms and suites. They are holding 20 rooms for MOGSouth. The main building has a covered porch with rockers and a large common living room as well as large common kitchen. And plenty of safe parking for the Morgans.

Plans call for dinner Friday night at the inn, probably local Bar-Be-Cue. Saturday night we will have dinner at Charlie and Maidie's home on Lake Burton.

The cost for the dinners for both nights is \$25.00 per person. Of course as usual, the club will be providing the beer, wine and soft drinks for both nights.

On Saturday Charlie will have a scenic route mapped out for our touring as well as a place for lunch. After lunch we will motor to the William's home on Lake

Burton for a late afternoon 'noggin and Saturday night dinner.

Charlie plans to have his boat in the water for sightseeing on the lake Saturday afternoon and evening.

The cost of the rooms at the inn is \$97.01 per night double occupancy including tax and includes a fully cooked breakfast each morning. The only additional meal you will need to purchase will be lunch on Saturday. Please note that the inn does not accept any credit cards but will accept personal or company checks. Call the inn at 1 800 782-5780 and speak to Juanita to make your reservations. They will require one nights room charge as a deposit to hold your room. They will hold the twenty rooms until August 29.

Please complete the form found elsewhere in this newsletter and return to me along with your check made payable to MOGSouth for your meals for Friday and Saturday nights.

If you have any questions call Charlie or Maidie at 404 252-4632 or me at 404 634-9674.

We think we have a great meet planned and look forward to seeing you there.

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## 1997 MOGSouth Christmas Party

**R**eminder, the 1997 MOGSouth Christmas Party will be held at the home of Super Dave and Marilyn Bondon in Roswell, Georgia on Saturday, December 6. Specific details will be published in the late Fall but remember to mark your calendars now.

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## Morgan For Sale

1958 +4 Roadster

Serial #3872:\$11,900

Paul Chichester: 770 457-7860

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*Thank you to Morgan Bondon, Sarah Powell and Fred Sisson for your articles this issue. Any and all contributions are welcome.*

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# Maintenance

## SOME THOUGHTS

Maintenance on a Morgan is pretty straightforward and for many of us, that is part of its charm. The fact that we can do the required maintenance ourselves provides us not only with a sense of accomplishment, but also it is there is a satisfaction in knowing that we are not held hostage to computer equipped shops.

No one can maintain a car as well as the driver. You know from daily communication, just what is happening to it. Sounds, smells, love and feel are as important as instruments early detection of problems.

I would say that a Morgan is a fairly "high-maintenance" automobile, but there is not much that is beyond the capability of the home mechanic. Even the farmer has to groom the mule. Love and massage the Morgan and it will reward you with a long life- maybe for both of you.

There are three basic aspects of maintenance; *Lubrication, adjustments and... keeping it together.*

All this is preventive maintenance. However the last aspect, keeping it together, is fairly unique to older cars as the construction and fasteners are not as sophisticated as today's cars. If you approach "keeping it together" as a three step process of checking, *adjusting and improving*, then as the years go by you will have less and less adjusting to do. Forget the recommended intervals! Just do it often, when ever you feel like massaging the beast.

The owner of any tricked-out, fast, reliable, neat Morgan, will tell you that they are totally unconcerned about maintenance. They will also tell you that their Morgan is very reliable!!! How can this be? It is because they love their ride and are constantly working on it. Not because they have to, nor because it needs to be fixed, but because they like to massage something mechanical (their Morgan). You might say that they over-maintain their car.

If you "over-maintain" your car, you will soon learn what wears, what needs adjustment or more lube, etc. If something works loose, try to figure out why, then take a step to prevent it from happening again.

Owners without this mind set are those who ultimately have one of those dumb bumper stickers on their car "All parts falling off this car are genuine British." *That sticker says a lot about the competence of the owner.* Gotta place the blame somewhere...

Don't just tighten a loose bolt back down.... replace the lock washer, use a new bolt, use Loctite, safety-wire.... *do something to try and insure that it will not come loose again!*

Slowly, over an extended period, you will find fewer and fewer problems. The car becomes more and more reliable. You are refining the breed.

## TREAT IT RIGHT

Some quick tips to consider:

### Before starting

Check the coolant level & oil. Check brake fluid level- and clutch fluid level if yours is hydraulic. Look under at the brakes and tyres for signs of fluid leaks.

### Starting

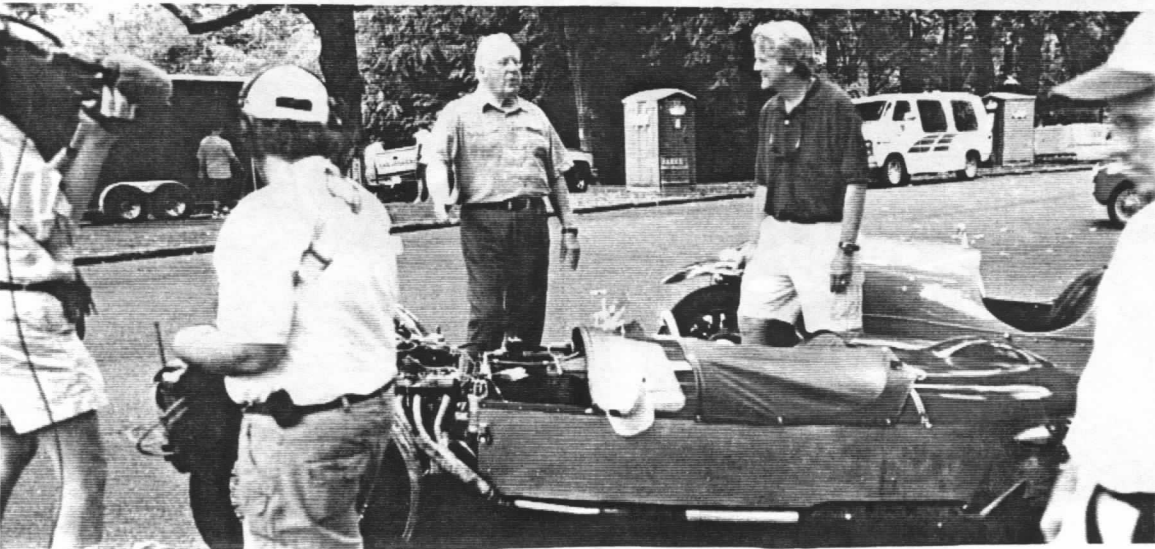
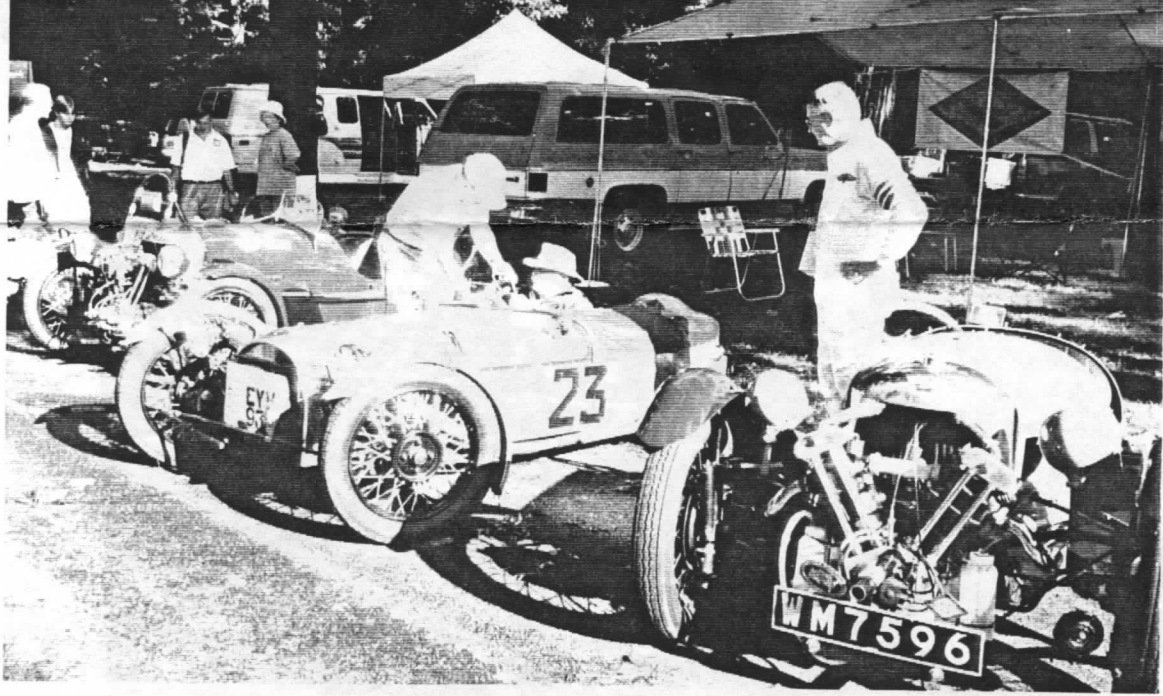
Start the car in neutral, and don't press the clutch pedal. All the spring pressure from the clutch is exerted upon the engine's thrust bearings. Starting with the clutch pressed means that you are exerting pressure on those bearings before they have received their first lube of the day.

Once it is running and you have good oil pressure- then you can use the clutch. Hit the front-end oiler for a few seconds while the oil is cool and will not wash the grease from the front suspension.

The above Tip From Fred is re-printed with permission from *The Morgan Driver's Bedside Reader* by long time Morgan owner and MOGSouth member Fred Sisson. For your copy, contact Fred at 770 446-7124 or at 5807 Western Hills Dr., Norcross, GA30071. The cost is \$50.00 and it comes with a money back guarantee!



# MOGSOUTH TRIKE TEAM



MOGSOUTH MEMBERS AT MOG 27





## FALL MEET RESERVATION FORM

To insure the success of the 1997 Fall Meet, please take the time to provide me with the following:

1. A head count for dinner on Friday night.
2. A head count for dinner on Saturday night.
3. Your check to MOGSouth for the cost of the meals for Friday and Saturday nights.

Please, I need this by August 29, 1997. Mail your response or call 404 634-9674 with your response. Thank you!

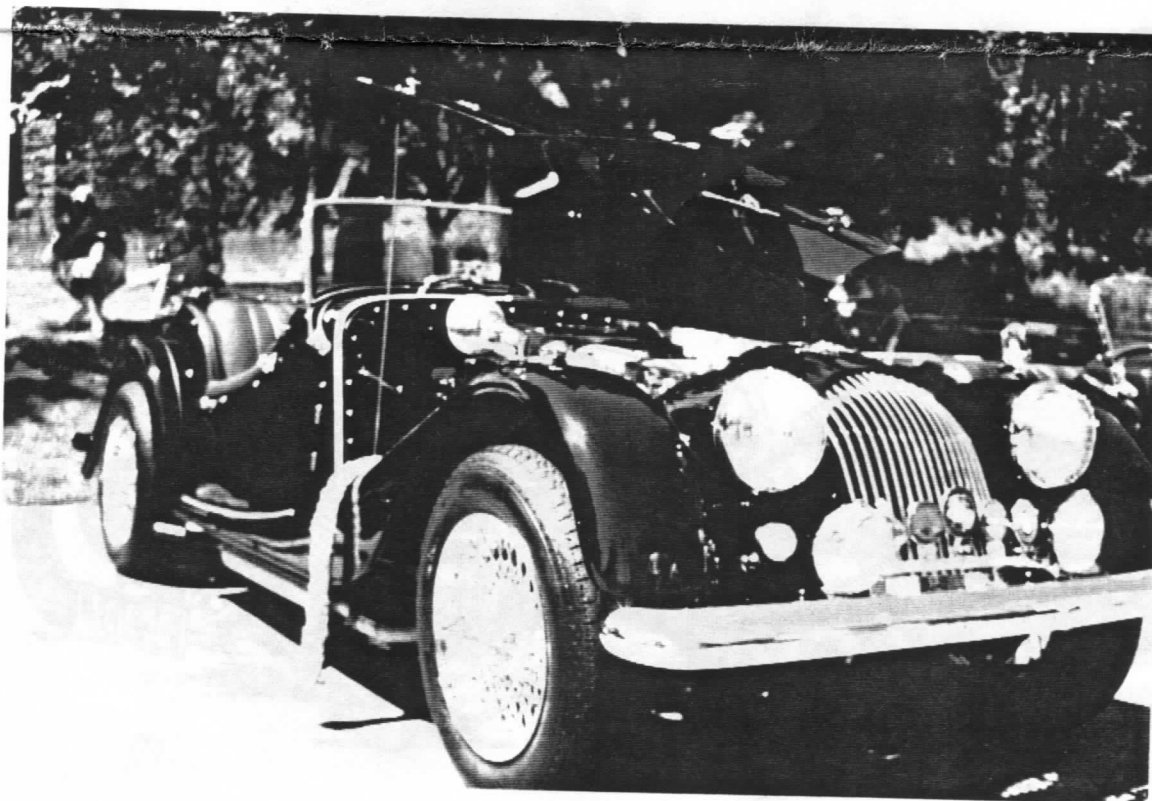
Mail to: Randy Johnson-1794 Fair Oaks Place-Decatur, GA 30033-1449

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# IN OUR PARTY: \_\_\_\_\_ FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER

# IN OUR PARTY: \_\_\_\_\_ SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER

Enclosed is my check to MOGSouth in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25.00 per person) to cover the cost of the meals for Friday and Saturday nights, September 5 and 6.



NEW MOGSOUTH MEMBER TOM PERKINS' BEST IN SHOW  
MOG 27 CONCOURS WINNING '65 PLUS FOUR

**SOUTHERN FOURS AND EIGHTS**

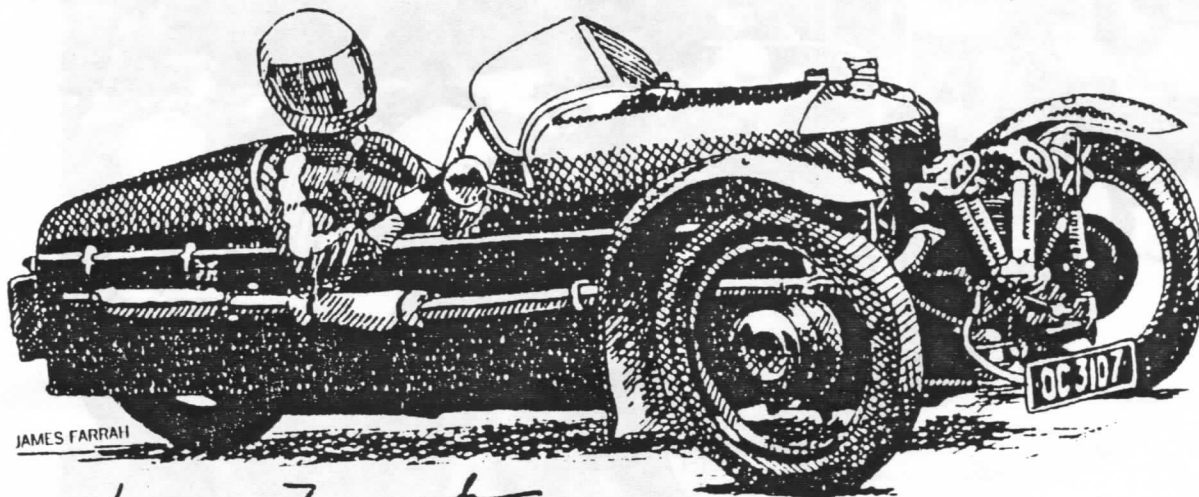
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1794 Fair Oaks Place

Decatur, Georgia 30033-1449



**Mark and Andrea Braunstein**  
**810 Crossfire Ridge**  
**Marietta, GA 30064**



*James Farrah*