

# Brake Light Switch

Hugh Dickson

Three or four months after repairs and rewiring were completed after an engine fire in my Morgan (see details in a NWMogazine of about five years ago), my brake lights began malfunctioning. I phoned the local "walking encyclopedia" of British cars hereabouts, Dave Price of Octagon Motors, a chap I've been dealing with since I acquired my Morgan in 1963. Price has been in the business for (are you ready??) 51 YEARS. He knows almost everything there is to know about British cars.

Octagon, as you may suspect, is an MG outfit, headed by Colin Fitzgerald who puts on the Whistler All-British Run. I explained my situation over the phone to Dave, that five or six years ago, and he said "Oh, I'm sure we have one of those; they're pretty much the same on all British cars - it has a tapered thread, right?" I said I'd check. I unscrewed it a wee bit (not enough to spill any brake fluid) and yes, it has a tapered threaded screw-in part.

Over I went and bought the thing for \$14.25 on July 21, 2000. I have the receipt right here. He quoted part number A16-31A on the bill.

"So, Dave, I guess I'm gonna have to put a jug under the brake line to catch the fluid and then bleed the brakes because the brake fluid will run out when I take the old one out," I lamented.

"Oh, no," he replied, drawing on his years of expertise. "Just take the cap off the brake fluid reservoir and put a piece of saran wrap over the reservoir and down the sides and put a tight elastic band around it," Dave explained. "That way, no air can get in, so no fluid, or very little will drip out when you replace the switch. But do it quickly - as soon as you've got the old one out, get the new one in as quickly as possible, just in case there is a leak."

And that is what I did. It was a snap. Octagon Motor Group is at 1538 Venables Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2G9. You can order from out-of-town toll free by calling 1-800-459-0251.

I just hope Dave Price is still there. He's legendary hereabouts. Last time I had reason to phone Octagon they said Dave was taking some time off; so I dunno if he may have retired or not. He's a real class guy, too. However, if he's not there I'm sure whomever answers the phone should be able to supply the same brake light switch I bought, although the price may be a tad higher than five years ago.

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## Book Review

*More Morgan: A Pictorial History of the Morgan Sports Car* by Gregory Houston Bowden

Publisher: Dodd, Mead & Co, 1977, 223 pages

ISBN 0-396-07418-9 (out of print)

Reviewed by Tim Johnson

This book has more photos than Bowden's *First and Last of the Real Sports Cars*. Bowden's access to Morgan Motor Company and Morgan family archives is obvious.

*More Morgan* contains information on some unusual and rare Morgans as well as photos. There are lots of three wheelers, company advertisements, some catalog cuts, and a chapter on Morgan clubs from around the world. This book is currently out of print. (Note: "Out of Print" books are often found at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and on [eBay](http://eBay.com).)

# Aftermarket Car Heater

Tim Johnson

My search for information on the heater in my Morgan began when the 12-volt fan motor quit working. The heater also needed to be repainted. My 1957 Morgan Plus 4 (chassis number 3946) was originally delivered to Fergus Imports, New York, from the factory. The chassis record Remarks section indicates "Grey Leather, Wire Wheels." There is no mention of a heater.

I pulled the entire heater out of the car, took it completely apart and could not find a single brand name, model number or any identifying markings. The only mark was a 1955 date stamp on the motor. After having removed the heater, I found that all of the parts can be serviced or replaced without having to pull the whole heater from the car. To service or change the fan motor, you will need to pull the heater core from the heater, so you can access the nuts that hold the fan motor in place.

I did extensive Internet searches and finally reached a man by telephone who was able to help me. When I described the heater box dimensions and design, he told me I had a Hup brand, Model 356 heater. He said the color of my heater was the original grey hammertone.



**Hup #356, now Maradyne #5000  
(replacement motor #53005)**

Hup, he told me, had been sold a number of times, the name discontinued, and my heater was now very similar to a Maradyne, Model 5000. He said Maradyne kept the original design because it was so well done. I called Maradyne and they confirmed that their model 5000 is the old Hup 356 only now with square corners instead of round. They said the replacement fan motor part number was 53005 and they were even able to supply me with a local supplier who had three motors in stock.

I took all of the heater parts with me when I bought the fan motor. With the exception of having to drill out the two holes to mount the fan motor in the heater box, it was an identical replacement. The new motor has a slightly heavier mounting bolt, 1/16 inch diameter larger, but on the same center-to-center dimensions.

I repainted the heater box with an exact match on color, using Hammerite grey paint. I also repainted the fan blade, and took the heater core to have it pressure checked. The radiator shop did find a small leak near one of the supply tubes which they repaired and then painted the core.

I suspect that the switch which is mounted on the front door of the heater is not original. It is drilled slightly off center, something I doubt that would have been done during manufacturing. I left the switch in place because I like the way it works. It has a "full on" position with a light behind the knob to indicate it is on. A second position puts the switch in to a variable mode, allowing the fan to run at various speeds, with the light dimming or brightening with the speed of the motor.