

# Bent Disk Wheels?

Hugh Dickson

Got wobbly, elongated, or bent solid steel wheels on your Moggie and live in the Greater Vancouver area?

Well, my 1958 Morgan, with original 5.00 x 16 inch steel wheels was, in recent years, getting increasingly wobbly and shuddery to drive. After all, it had been some 20 years since I last had the wheels straightened.

Up until a couple years ago I was able to offset the out-of-roundness by utilizing a very good tire balancing outfit down the road from my place. And the guys at that joint repeated told me what I already knew; that the wheels were out of round and bent.

I'm still using old-fashioned bias ply tires and I purchased a new set only about 12,000 miles ago, but alas, unlike the olden days when you bought those kinds of tires, no one has the equipment to plane the tires to true round like they used to do. So, yes, there could be some out-of-roundness in the tires too.

The guys at the wheel balancing and tire shop recommended a couple of places, but I decided to go back to the long-established Green's Automotive, based in Richmond, and which celebrated its 50th year in business back in 2003. That's the same little shop that straightened my wheels about 20 years ago. Any joint that's been operating for 52 years oughta know what they're doin', I thought.

I found Green's has moved from the central Richmond area into much bigger and more modern facilities on Westminster Highway in eastern Richmond. And they're very busy.

I took the wheels off my Moggie, stuffed them in the cavernous trunk of my '67 Chrysler 300, and off I went.

I dealt with Bob Green who quickly determined only three wheels needed straightening. I mentioned one of the potential causes of my bent wheels could be the fact that when I switched from 5.00 width tires to 5.25 many years ago, I encountered a bit of tire squeal against the inner frame at the rear and had been using big washers as spacers.

"Ya, that could contribute to bent wheels," he confirmed. He said he could make up proper full-size spacers for the rear wheels.

Two of the wheels were more bent than the other. Cost? \$45 each for the worse two and \$35 for the other wheel,

plus balancing and \$25 each for cutting, drilling and polishing two 3/16 inch thick full size spacers for the rear wheels, plus taxes.

I took the ancient Moggie out for a fast run on Highway 401 to test the newly-straightened and balanced wheels.

Result? A 90 per cent improvement!! Just a hint of shudder from 50 to about 53 miles an hour, possibly from the old-fashioned tires and/or other factors. But ultra-smooth otherwise, nary a twitch in the steering wheel.

I haven't yet tried switching the now-straightened wheels around to find the best two for the front.

Green's business card says it specializes in aluminum wheel repairs, Alcoa and motorcycle wheel repairs, custom polishing, widening and offsetting of aluminum and steel wheels, drive shaft repairs and balancing and rusted frame repairs.

I asked Bob Green about the widening and offsetting of steel wheels - "could you widen these old steel wheels outward, so nothing scrapes on the frame or body and could I then switch to radial ply tires?"

"Absolutely," he said.

Hmmm ... food for thought. A nice set of low-profile high-performance radials mounted on dished wheels? But I didn't feel like shelling out extra money for fancy new radial tires when the old bias plys are performing quite nicely now. After all, I bought them only about 12,000 to 15,000 miles ago. And that's what the car came with.

## Wheel Vibration

Steve Hutchens

Interested in learning more about front wheel vibration on a Morgan? Check the article at [www.team.net/www/morgan/tech/art022.html](http://www.team.net/www/morgan/tech/art022.html) by John Blair. John suggests a simple test to see if your tires and/or wheels are out of round:

*Place a block in front of a tire (or beside a wheel), then use a screw driver held on the block as a pointer. Jack up far enough to get the desired wheel off the ground (use jack stands for safety). Move the pointer so that it is perpendicular to the wheel and just touches the tire (or just touches the rim where it rolls in - where the bead seats). Spin the wheel and watch for variations in the gap between the pointer and the tire (or rim). If the gap is less than 1/8" the tire (or rim) is OK. If the gap is greater than 1/8" the tire should be replaced (or the wheel will have to be trued).*

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24,000 soldiers were killed, the highest number in US history. It was unbelievable. At 9:00 the Keg was opened again and the stories began of the rally and previous rallies and which year was tougher.

July 4<sup>th</sup> arrived and we were all going racing. Pat and I drove up, only intending



to watch and enjoy the pigpickings BBQ but finally Pat got convinced to race, so I went and stripped the car arranged tech inspection and within an hour we were ready to go. The only trouble was it was getting hot and we had been in the sun for hours. Racing had started at 10:30 and now it was 3:00 and Pat figured we had two hours to wait. We decided to pack it in and head for the hotel to get cooled off. Too bad, I thought it might have been fun but there will be another time. That evening was the awards dinner, which was a wonderful time. Alan Marsh, a Past President of the Washington club and a participant in 3 of the MOAs stood up and made a special presentation on behalf of the participants of MOA IV. I received the Peter Morgan Medal in recognition of my efforts running the driver's meetings on MOA IV. It was a pleasant surprise! Later during the official presentations Pat received the award for best 4 seater, Pat and I each received awards for finishing fourth in the rally and of course furthest driven in a Morgan. Mog35 and the day concluded with the keg and his accompanying stories in the courtyard.

MOG35 was a great event and one that Pat and I will not soon forget. I encourage all of you to go and attend one of these large Morgan-only meets whether it is Mog-West or MOG-East. You will meet new Morgan friends and learn something from some of the internationally know Morgan drivers such as John Sheally, Lorne Goldman, Denis Glavish, Greg Solo, Keith Ahlers, etc. Pat and I are already talking about when we are going back to MOG-East to renew the new friendships we have made and hopefully to make new ones.