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# BRITISH MORGAN HORSE SOCIETY CELEBRATES FIFTY YEARS

Over Easter weekend 2025, Morgan horse lovers from far and wide gathered to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the British Morgan Horse Society (BHMS), started in 1975. During the spirited and joyful celebration members and friends shared stories and memories commemorating the momentous occasion.

Together, my friend Georgia Bulmer Ferreira and I had the opportunity to speak on behalf of Britain's Morgan faithful at the Easter weekend event, sincerely stating, "I believe I can speak for all involved with the British Morgan Horse Society and say, these 'little ole' Morgan horses have truly shaped our lives. All of us have so many memories from the past fifty years, from the national team displays at Chatsworth House and Horse of the Year Show, to showing at county shows, all those Easter clinics and parades up Monnington Walk (with John Bulmer's famous 'rocket fuel' hot cider waiting for us—whoa!), to riding down Rotten Row in Hyde Park, to the

open days at Monnington, and riding before Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her Diamond Jubilee celebrations. So many wonderful memories and so many wonderful friends were made on both sides of the Atlantic.

By Douglas Wade

"But the focus here has to be on two visionary people who started the BMHS. They are the blueprint for all of this, the truly inspirational and very beloved John and Angela Bulmer. John and Angela gave life to the BMHS. It was their foresight, artistic and creative passions that led them to the Morgan horse, inspiration for John's film *The Artist's Horse*. Together they brought the Morgan horse to the United Kingdom in 1975. They opened their hearts, their home, and their lives to all of us.

"Their generosity gave rise to the Morgan community in this country we cherish today. Following in Monnington's footsteps, so many of us have gone on to create our own farms and breeding programs. And now there are more than 1,000 registered Morgans here because of them! Bravo to John and Angela and the amazing

**ABOVE:** John and Angela Bulmer receiving a plaque from the AMHA commemorating fifty years since the founding of BMHA. From left: Mike Goebig, Cindy Mugnier, John and Angela Bulmer, Erica Eulau, and Tony Lee (photo © Sally Blair).

American Morgan horse.”

Others shared colorful memories and anecdotes of Monnington, John and Angela, and the Morgan horse in the United Kingdom, as follows.



Queen Elizabeth II, Don Berry, Angela Conner Bulmer, and the wonky lamp.

“In the early days, we didn’t have all the correct ‘kit’ for our particular carriage. Kit is naturally taken very seriously in the Private Drive Classes. On one occasion Don Berry, Monnington trainer at the time, and myself were at the Royal Windsor Horse Show and about to be presented to Queen Elizabeth II with our stallion Tarryall Maestro. We’d struggled all season with a ‘wonky’ Lamp for our carriage and when being judged I’d usually have to subtly reach down and hold the lamp in the correct position on my side of the carriage. Queen Elizabeth quietly and graciously ‘didn’t notice,’ but chose instead to make a kind comment on Maestro.”

*Angela Conner Bulmer, co-founder BMHS*



The 22-year-old Landside Music Lord wins Supreme In-Hand Champion at the Veterans Championship Show, 2018, with Tim Northholt.

“Our involvement with the Morgan horse and the BMHS has definitely been a family affair for us. Ethan and Lily, our children, come to the farm and ride and brush the horses if they want to. They

participate in the youth clinics and shows. Being around horses is the perfect way for them to forget about electronic gadgets and screens. The Morgan has taught us that one can be an amazing show horse yet incredibly gentle around children—Morgans treat them as precious cargo.

Morgans bring people together with a common interest in a magnificent breed. We have our family, our farm family at Landside Morgans, and, with all the people we have gotten to know in the BMHS, many lifelong friendships.”

*Tim Northholt, Landside Morgans*



Robin Hepwith and Belmont The Gigolo galloping in the rain.

“I can’t exactly say when this was, but I was probably about 55 years old, with a few years riding experience only. On the August bank holiday, Monnington, where we kept our horses, used to host their ‘Horse Displays and Open Gardens’ event as part of a national charity scheme. There’s me on Belmont The Gigolo (UC Echo x Tri-jas Gold Peace) doing the Western riding display. It was going quite well, there was a side-pass, then we loped up to the gazebo at the top of the green and halted. Back up a few paces,

except ‘Belmont’ swung his hind end to the side. Hmm, OK, if that’s what he wants to do we will carry on and reverse a full circle and off at a lope. Loads of applause and bravo! My wife, Shirley, was listening as one woman comes out with, ‘It must cost them a fortune to bring these professional riders over from the USA!’ She didn’t correct them. Ho Ho!!”

*Robin Hepwith*



Trudy Connolly with Angela Conner Bulmer.

“The best of times I owe to the British Morgan Horse Society! The British Morgan Horse Society has been the gift that keeps on giving. It has given me endless opportunities throughout my career and lifelong friends. I am forever grateful.”

*Trudy Connolly, BMHA Registrar and trainer at Monnington*



Madeleine Campbell and Angela Conner Bulmer, Easter 2025.

“Little did I know that when purchasing my first Morgan mare, Bald Mt Roseann (‘Hersey’) from Monnington, I would begin a lifelong friendship with Angela Conner and John Bulmer that has become one of the mainstays and great joys of my life.”

*Madeleine Campbell,  
Tribute Morgans*

Blue Peter with my much younger brother in 1975, I wouldn’t have known that Morgans existed in the UK, let alone existed at all! Featured in the TV programme was a beautiful, intelligent, and very memorable Springervale Pecora and her owner-rider, Angela Conner. Forward a year and had I not purchased that week’s copy of *Horse and Hound* magazine I wouldn’t have seen the advert in the classifieds for ‘Manager/Trainer at the breed’s foundation farm, Monnington.’ John and Angela gave me a life-changing opportunity and my introduction and start with these wonderful horses.”

*Anne Bond, Monnington Morgans’ first trainer*



Helen Allanson and BFM Finns Fancy.

“When I bought (or was chosen by) my Morgan gelding, ‘Finn,’ (BFM Finns Fancy) I, like many other people, had not seen or heard of the Morgan breed before. As a family we now have seven beautiful Morgans, the youngest we bred ourselves and they were born at home. I believe our Morgans are so typical of the breed in that each of them is full of character and personality that easily endears them to people. They are such a pleasure to own that it is impossible to have just one.”

*Helen Allanson,  
BMHS Treasurer*



Tony Phillips on Waseeka Firecracker with Angela Conner Bulmer on Springervale Pecora, Hyde Park, 1993.

“For nearly twenty years, starting in the mid-1980s, Morgan horses were the core of our lives. Ionian Morgans grew out of a family passion for these unique horses and the people around them. We visited Monnington, met with John and Angela, and were hooked—line and sinker. I proudly became president of the BMHS for more than ten years and made many friends. My father purchased the stallion Waseeka

Firecracker (Waseeka’s Here Tiz x Windcrest Sentimental Lady). Unfortunately, the stud had gotten a bad reputation prior to us owning him. We weren’t phased by this, and ‘Cracker’ soon became a firm family favorite. We based our breeding program around him. We did everything with that horse. The kids rode him, I showed him, he even took part in the national displays. Happy days indeed.”

*Tony Phillips, former president of BMHS*



Anne Bond rides Royalton Felicia, Hertfordshire County Show, 1980.

“When John and Angie asked me if I would be interested in ‘taking on’ the BMHS Youth, I have to say I was a little hesitant. My life at the time was already running at peak capacity; having three teenage boys all at various schools and colleges both in the United Kingdom and United States, working full time as principal of a kindergarten school in Holland Park, London, and my husband, Jason, and I had a full and fun social life too. So why take on the BMHSY? I must have been crazy, but you know Angie... I not only ended up taking



The first BMHS Youth Leader, Nina Bacon, on her very own Solstice Firedance, with Katie Kearns and Maddy Campbell assisting, from the mid-1980s.

“Had I not been watching the famous BBC children’s program

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on this project but also breeding and riding my very own Morgan horse, Solstice Firedance (Tarryall Maestro x Isla Mor Starfire), of whom I'm very proud. The British Morgan horse scene was full of love and comradery. I look back on that with great fondness."

*Nina Bacon, New Haven, Vermont*

"I worked two jobs after school for three years to save money to buy my Morgan mare, Barbary's Nemesis (Neptune's Mirage x Barbary's Finessa). I was 18 years old and my father, a Cornish fisherman, helped me import her. We were both so very taken by these romantic, intelligent, and kind horses. Angela Conner went out of her way to find me 'Nemmie' and bargained on my behalf for her. I will be eternally grateful. She made this young girl's dream come true."

*Lynn Bagwell, Cornwall*

And finally, when asking John Bulmer about a memory from the past fifty years, he animatedly told me a story I remember well—I was there!

"Our foundation stallion, Tarryall Maestro, was just a two-year-old and had only been hooked a few weeks when we needed to show the breed at our first public show, the huge Hertfordshire County Agricultural Show, I think this was 1979. Jeanne Mellin Herrick was the judge. Maestro was exuberant, like a coiled spring. Never



John Bulmer swimming his beloved stallion Tarryall Maestro.

dangerous, just a spirited two-year-old. I had little control as the steering wasn't polished like a seasoned show horse would have been. Ring stewards were seen jumping aside and fleeing away as we headed straight toward the rope fence that made up the ring. Maestro would, of course, always go in the direction asked, just somewhat at the last minute. These were adrenaline-filled showing experiences, and I dare say got the public watching too."

*John Bulmer*



John Bulmer leading the 2018 Easter Parade up Monnington Walk (photo © Robin Hepworth).

## DECADES OF MORGAN MEMORIES IN GREAT BRITAIN

This assortment of photos from over the years illustrates the Morgan breed's evolution in England, the lasting influence of the foundation farm at Monnington, and many of the personalities engaged in both competition and promotion of the breed.



1. New arrivals to the UK, Bob Brooks aboard Pegasus Royal Pride and Angela Conner Bulmer on Tarryall Cadenza riding through Weobley, Spring 1975; 2. Fred Herrick preparing three-year-old Tarryall Maestro for saddle training, 1978; 3. Joan Osgood takes the first ride on Tarryall Maestro, 1978; 4. Elizabeth Sharp rides the stallion Pegasus Royal Pride, Northumberland 1979.



## DECADES OF MORGAN MEMORIES IN GREAT BRITAIN



1. Mary Woolverton at a BMHS Youth Clinic, 1980; 2. Jeanne Mellin on Tarryall Maestro, with her sister Joan Osgood and Val and Tony Lomas; 3. BMHS Youth members pose with Islamor Starfire, Monnington 1984; 4. Georgia Bulmer (Ferreira) and father John Bulmer aboard Tarryall Maestro; 5. BMHS national display team, Horse of the Year Show, October 1985.



## DECADES OF MORGAN MEMORIES IN GREAT BRITAIN



1. BMHS ride, Rotten Row, Hyde Park, London, early 1990s; 2. The BMHS display team, Chatsworth House, early 1990s; 3. Monnington Flute and Monnington Forte parade and salute in front of Queen Elizabeth II; 4. Andrea Ensing drives Tedwin On The Mark, Three Counties Show, with American trainer Cliff Swanson presenting, 1999.



DECADES OF MORGAN MEMORIES IN GREAT BRITAIN



1. Lynn Price driving Monnington Strauss and Skyrock Cloud Dancing, National Driving Trials, 2015; 2. The Northholt family and Landside Music Lord photographed for the front cover of the BMHS magazine in 2019; 3. Morgans perform for Queen Elizabeth II (seen in blush pink suit in background, right); 4. Camilla, Queen Consort, and Charlestown Supersonic with John Bulmer; 5. Tim Northholt and Landside Music Lord accepting the winning trophy, Veterans Championship Horse Show 2018; 6. Angela Conner Bulmer showing Optimus Prime GCH, imported by Monnington in 2018, 43 years after their initial importation in 1975. ■

