Y-TYPE NEWSLETTER

Good Spark – Wrong Time?

If like me you have had problems with the running of your YB, then you may be interested in this article reproduced from Blowers M.G. Workshop Manual. You might be running with the wrong points gap, and believe me it does make all the difference, now read on:

Distributor Fixing

A new standardised method of distributor fixing was incorporated on the "TD" Midget and 1¼ Litre Models having an improved fixing arrangement in place of the adjusting clip. The improved fixing details were introduced at engine No. XPAG/TD2/20942 on the "TD" Midget and engine No. XPAG/SC2/17670 on the 1¼ Litre Series "YB".

The modified fixing comprises a tapered cotter bolt passing through the distributor housing boss in the cylinder block and contacting the stem of the distributor, and it replaces the split adjusting clip hitherto employed.

Distributors using the cotter pin attachment are released by slackening the cotter bolt inwards to free its tapered surface from the stem of the distributor.

While the location of the distributor rotor will not be disturbed owing to the action off the offset driving tongue, release of the distributor body and stem will affect the ignition point, and it is therefore essential to mark the distributor body and face of its housing before removal, to ensure correct ignition timing on replacement. The distributor housing face is marked with a scale to facilitate this.

Distributors

New distributors were introduced on the M.G. Midget "TD" at engine No. XPAG/TD2/24489 and on the 1¼ Litre Saloon Series "YB" at engine No. XPAG/SC2/18097.

These later type distributors are fitted with high lift cams. Owing to the shape of these cams the contact breaker gap must be set at 0.014 in. to 0.016 in. (0.36m/m to 0.41m/m). Previous distributor cams were of two types, symmetric and asymmetric and both these types necessitated a contact breaker gap of 0.010 in. to 0.012 in. (0.25mm. to 0.030mm.).

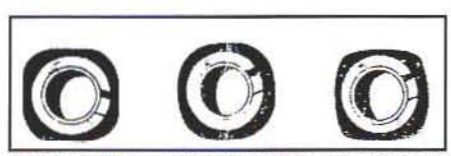
The wider gap of the high lift cam together with the steep angle of the cam face, gives more accurate ignition timing and controls pitting and piling action which limits useful contact life.

When setting contact gaps with the high lift cam more care is needed when checking that the fibre heel is in the highest point of the cam rise, because maximum separation of the contact points is only obtained over a small angular movement of the distributor shaft.

All three types of cams are illustrated in Fig. 7. Apart from the appearance of the cams, distributors fitted with the high lift cams can be identified by reference to the suffix letter which follows the Service No. Distributors bearing the suffix "E" or any letter subsequent to "E" after the service No. 40162 are fitted with high lift cams, and those with suffix letters previous to "E" are of the symmetric or asymmetric type.

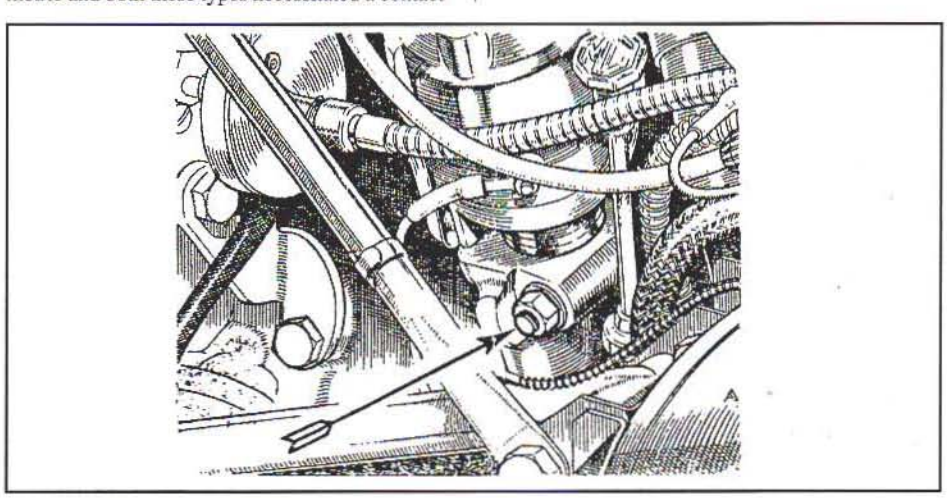
The contact breaker setting for the symmetric and asymmetric type is 0.010 in. to 0.012 in. (0.25mm. to 0.30mm.) gap, and for the high lift cam type is 0.014 in. to 0.016 in. (0.36 mm. to 0.41 mm.).

It is interesting to note that this type of distributor has a built in suppressor, the loose suppressor to part No. 24464 on the "TD" and part No. 163439 on the 1¼ Litre Saloon Series "YB" now no longer being required.



SYMMETRIC ASYMMETRIC HIGH LIFT

The three types of Distributor Cam.



Later type Distributor Fixing consisting of cotter bolt engaging distributor body and stem.

THE 'LIGHT RESTORATION'

A few thoughts – from a 'Y' Type owner – or will it ever be finished?

JERRY BIRKBECK

I bought my YA, RVW 761, in January 1992, exactly three years ago by the time you read this. I had searched for several months for a Y type, and preferably a YB, in running order and with a current MOT but without any success. The few around were way outside my budget.

Eventually, when I came across RVW 761, a very original and sound model, although it had not been in regular use since 1985, it required what can be loosely described as a 'light restoration'. Essentially this has involved fitting a complete new braking system, re-wire, new floor, exhaust system and minor work to the engine and it still needs a re-spray.

Hopefully by now (January) it will have been tested and on the road with other work undertaken as time and finance allow.

A few thoughts on my experiences, many of which others will have come across. They may be of some interest to newcomers or potential purchasers.

+ Join a Club, preferably as many as you can afford – M.G.C.C., M.G.O.C., Octagon and 'Y' Type Register.
There is a wealth of experience and advice to be drawn from not only the magazines and newsletters produced by these worthy organisations but also they provide access to useful sources for spare parts.
+ The experts are right – do list what you do, take notes, photographs etc.
Sadly too often I have relied on memory and used 'somewhere safe' to store parts, only to forget a month or so later where that 'safe' place was.
+ List the jobs to be undertaken and check before you start on availability of parts.
The rebuild of the braking system, took nearly five months largely owing to the difficulty of obtaining certain items. Thankfully on a couple of occasions Dennis was able to help.
+ Take a handbook, parts list and a copy of John Lawson's *Alternative Parts List*, when you search for that elusive part and of course ideally take the original with you, should you be replacing a damaged part.
+ Rusted nuts and bolts can be time consuming to remove. When you know that you can easily acquire replacement bolts of the appropriate thread, then borrow or purchase an angle grinder.
(Remember always to use goggles and take care that there are no combustible items around.) Replacing the floor took me far longer than I had anticipated due to problems with seized bolts – inevitably the final one to remove! Removing the seat runners was almost impossible, despite a generous application of 3 in 1 oil being left for a week to soak in. An angle grinder proved to be highly effective. Over 40 years use had had an effect on two of the four runners – a split at one end had to be welded.
+ When replacing the floor obtain a sheet of 8' x 4' x ½" marine ply. Use the existing boards if available, as a template. Apply at least three coats of external varnish and finish off the boards inside the car with blackboard paint. When replacing use stainless steel bolts, nuts and washers and apply either copperease or grease.
+ Carefully examine the garage or space and work on the car.
Struggling in a standard 16' x 8' garage can be fraught – how do you remove a half shaft in such tight conditions – you can't!
If you have a pit or ideally a ramp well I suppose this article isn't really for you! Like many people I suspect I find it's a case of placing the car on axle stands with additional support. A wheeled creeper to lie on would be very handy – perhaps a Christmas present or maybe I'll make one?
+ Friends are a willing and helpful source of advice and many indeed offer to have parts made up for you.
Fine – but it can of course take a long time. It took me four months for someone to very kindly supply me with a length of veneered ply for the dash panel.
+ Finally, do not despair when things are held up for a variety of reasons try and undertake something each week. Do keep in touch with your family, who whilst understanding do like to be seen or taken out on occasions, their support really is essential.

Attatched are a couple of suppliers whom I have been in touch with and who can provide useful parts for 'Y' types.

Part Suppliers:

HYDROJAWS (stainless steel wheel trims 15" and 16" and Desmo Badge Bars) Tel: 021 779 6856.

COASTING LTD, Spon Lane South, West Bromwich B66 1PB (brakes, gaskets, water pumps, starters, seals, dynamos and half shafts) Tel: 0121-500 5889.

Rare Spares:

WESTWOOD, Pirtway Road, Twyford, Bicester, Bucks MK18 4EB. Tel: 01296 730310

M.G. Parts. 12 months ago there were two 'Y' chassis, several windscreens, etc.

JERRY BIRKBECK

(I have some Y-Type windscreens for sale – Cheap! APW)

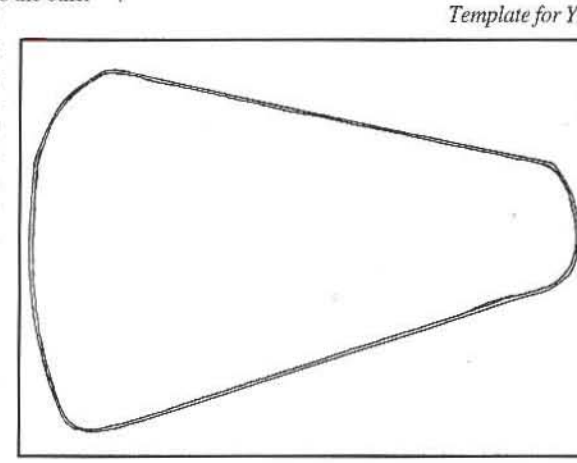
INCREASED VISIBILITY

Now that winter is truly with us, bringing with it the ever present driving difficulties of rain, fog and darker nights the ability of your Y-Type to stand out in these hazardous driving conditions is paramount. The thick red glass as fitted to the D-lamps on Y-Types as well as other older M.G.s does not compare well with modern high intensity lighting behind thin glass or plastic lenses. This became apparent when a colleague at one of our Y-Type meetings mentioned that when following my YB along the A3 one wet evening, the car virtually disappeared in the spray of the other road traffic.

The following day I looked in the D-lamps and discovered some flakes of white paint against the rust background to the lamps. When new the area surrounding the bulbs was painted white to help reflect the light out of the glass. Although it would have been relatively easy to restore this I decided to try for an alternative route.

I opened one of the rear lamps and placed a piece of grease-proof paper over the inside and carefully traced around the area of the bulbs. This was lightly stuck to a piece of cereal packet and cut out. This was then slipped behind the bulb assembly and tried for size. It took two or three goes to establish the correct shape, each time snipping small bits off the card template. Once you are sure that it clears the bulb clips and fixing screws, you can close up the lamp, and mark it either left or right depending on which one you are looking at. After placing it on another bit of card, draw around it to get another template. Again mark this for the other light. Cut this out and offer it up to the other lamp to check that it fits. Originally I tried gluing some silver foil to the back of the template to increase visibility but the foil crinkled and did not look satisfactory. The card template was taken to the glaziers and I asked for two pieces of thin mirror to be cut from the templates provided. Remember that these are 'handed' or you will end up with two pieces of mirror for one lamp! This should not cost more than £5.00 for the pair. Carefully slip the mirror behind the lamp clips, (you may have to ease them away from the body slightly in order to do this,) and check that it all fits. Once you have done this, araldite the mirror in place, checking the lamp closes properly. Once set the bulbs are checked and a quick squirt of WD40 should help prevent any rusting and improve electrical contact. Clean the mirror of any rust particles or oil, close up the lamp and you are ready to go.

Template for YB



HOW THE COOLING SYSTEM WORKS

The radiator **1**. and cooling system are filled with coolant, usually water or a mixture of water and anti-freeze. This is circulated around the water jacket **2**. by the water pump **3**. and syphonic action. The heat generated in the combustion chambers **4**. is transferred by conduction into the coolant. The heated coolant is then transmitted to the radiator via the top hose **5**. The coolant circulates through the numerous thin walled tubes of the radiator dissipating the heat to atmosphere, the air-flow through the radiator usually being assisted by a fan **6**. The coolant is then returned via the bottom hose **7**. to the water jacket, in a continuous circulating action.

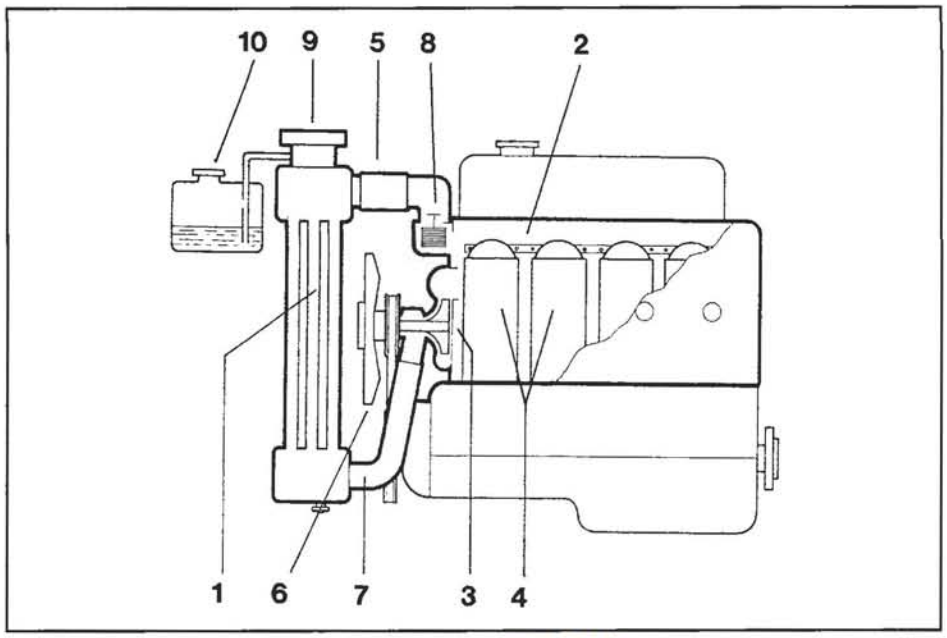
From the engine start up, the coolant must heat up quickly to the designed running temperature and then remain balanced at around 90°C to 105°C, depending on the designed operating pressure. This balance is achieved by the thermostat **8**. which opens and closes in response to changes in temperature controlling the flow of coolant from engine to radiator.

Modern cooling systems are pressurised and generally operate at around 9 to 16lb per sq. in., this pressure is maintained by the radiator cap **9**.

Pressurising of the cooling system raises the temperature at which the coolant will boil. The boiling point is raised 3°F for each 1lb per sq. in. pressure thereby permitting the designed running temperature to be increased for improved engine efficiency.

Some cooling systems include a separate expansion tank or coolant reservoir **10**. This is designed to exclude air from the cooling system and reduce the necessity for frequent topping up of the system. The continued addition of fresh water dilutes the antifreeze and inhibitors in the coolant.

Now let's look at some common problems which occur – how to remedy them and more importantly, how to prevent them happening in the future.



PROBLEM:
COOLANT LOSS

The most serious problem affecting the cooling system is probably the loss of coolant due to leaks and seepage. Motoring Organisations attend tens of thousands of roadside breakdowns as a result of coolant leaks.

A reduction in the quantity of coolant in the system can result in loss of circulation, overheating and the possibility of serious damage to the engine.

Leaks can occur virtually anywhere within the cooling system, the more common and easily identifiable external leakage points are:

Radiator connections. Core plugs. Water pumps, Hoses and connections. Thermostat housing, Heater, Heater hoses, Cylinder Head gaskets.

Internal leaks can be far more difficult to identify and cure, these leaks are usually associated with cylinder head gasket leakage, casting porosity and internal corrosion. They can result in contamination of the lubricating oil creating corrosion and damage to the working parts of the engine.

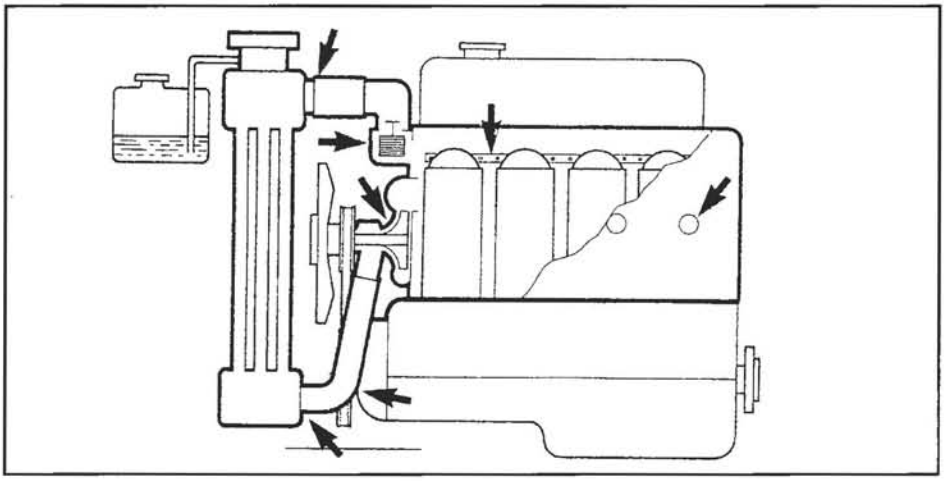
They can also form sludge deposits in the cooling system resulting in blockage and overheating.

SOLUTION: Bars Leaks used regularly as preventive maintenance will insure against corrosion and leaks. The sealant contained in Bars Leaks consists of millions of tiny particles – these are held in suspension and circulated around the entire cooling system remaining active for up to a year. They will search out and seal any leaks internal or external as and when they occur. Bars Leaks will seal leaks in rubber, plastic, aluminium and all other metals, without any harmful effects and is totally compatible with antifreeze.

Bars Leaks is used on the assembly lines by prestige motor manufacturers world-wide.

Only Bars has this world-wide seal of approval.

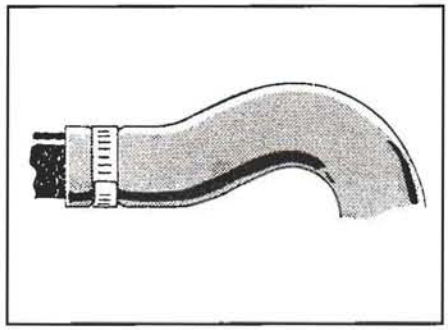
Points to check for coolant loss and seepage particularly soldered joints and hose connections.



PROBLEM:
LEAKING HOSES

Leaking Hoses and connections are one of the frequent causes of cooling system failure. Degeneration is often due to age and fatigue, however, the use of incompatible cooling system additives will accelerate this deterioration.

SOLUTION: Hoses should be checked at annual intervals prior to conditioning the cooling system. Brittle, collapsed or bulging hoses should be replaced. Bars Leaks has no harmful effects on rubber and extensive testing has proved that it actually improves the elasticity.

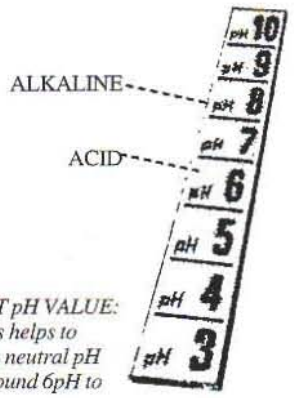


PROBLEM:
RUST & CORROSION

Rust and Corrosion is most commonly due to (a) simple interaction between metals and waterborne oxygen (b) galvanic or electrolytic action when coolant is slightly acid and dissimilar metals are in close proximity. Both of these processes are accelerated by heat.

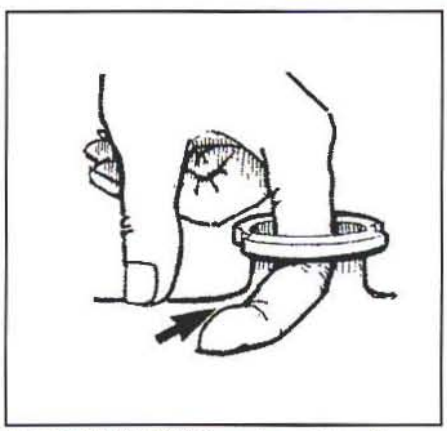
The use of aluminium in modern engines has substantially increased, this metal is particularly susceptible to attack by corrosion.

SOLUTION: Bars Leaks cooling system conditioner will provide protection against rust and corrosion. The special soluble oil neutralises both acid and alkaline conditions by maintaining the pH value of the coolant at around the neutral level.



COOLANT pH VALUE: Bars Leaks helps to maintain a neutral pH level of around 6pH to 8pH.

Bars Leaks is used in the initial fill up by leading motor manufacturers to inhibit against rust and corrosion.

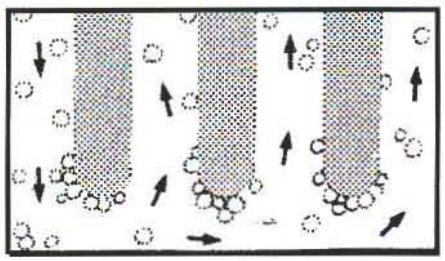


FINGER TEST: With the engine cold, run finger around the underside of the filler neck to check for rust and sludge deposits.

PROBLEM:

SCALING

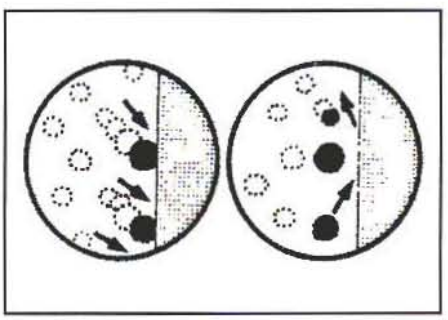
Common lime deposits experienced in hard water areas promote the formation of scale within the cylinder block and radiator. This condition restricts the transfer of heat to the coolant causing overheating. In severe cases, the coolant flow can be seriously restricted.



Build-up of lime scale particularly prevalent in hard water areas.

SOLUTION: Bars Leaks used regularly from new will prevent the build-up of lime scale deposits. The inhibiting properties and buffing agent in Bars Leaks are specifically designed to gently scrub away scale and rust deposits as they are continuously circulated through the cooling system.

In the case of existing lime scale contamination, the use of Bars Flush is recommended prior to the system being treated with Bars Leaks.



1. Lime scale at moment of crystallisation.
2. Action of BARS LEAKS dislodges lime scale and transfers back into suspension.

PROBLEM:

SLUDGING

Sludge deposits in the cooling system are mainly caused by small amounts of the by-products from combustion and engine oil contaminating the coolant. The use of some unapproved stop leak preparations will also lead to the formation of sludge deposits. This can result in the restriction and blockage of water passages and can cause overheating and distortion of engine parts.

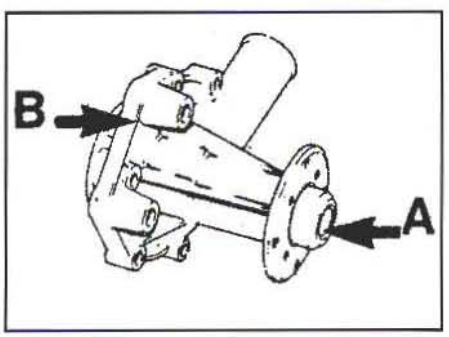
SOLUTION: Bars Leaks will seal the cooling system against coolant contamination due to cylinder head gasket leakage and casting porosity. The use of unapproved cooling system additives should be avoided.

PROBLEM:

WATER PUMP SQUEAK & CHATTER

The most common problems with water pumps are leaks around the pump shaft (A) or gasket (B) (see diagram).

SOLUTION: The special soluble oil in BARS LEAKS is carried both emulsified in the water and in the saturated particles, into the water pump, thereby eliminating or preventing squeak and chatter, at the same time seeking out and sealing any leaks.



Possible leakage points around the pump shaft A, or gasket B.

COOLING SYSTEM CHECK LIST

1. Examine radiator externally for damage and signs of coolant leakage.
2. Check that radiator core is free from external blockage at front and rear.
3. Inspect radiator cap and rubber sealing ring for damage and deterioration.
4. Check condition of all hoses and connections.
5. Examine radiator internally for rust and contamination (see Finger Test).
6. Inspect engine block and cylinder head gasket for external leaks with particular attention to the water pump, core plugs and thermostat housing.
7. Check fan belt for splits, wear and for correct tension.

BARS MOTOR PRODUCTS LTD. 8 Aintree Rd, Perivale, Greenford, Middlesex UB6 7LA.

It may seem that the above is a bit obvious, but some things cannot be stressed too often. Our thanks for the information go to Bars Motor Products Ltd.

Thank God It's Finished!

The date of this article, 5th April, marks the second anniversary of the purchase of my 1951 YA, which, as you may recall, was purchased in Bradford on Avon as a total wreck. As I write, the car awaits the return of some minor items of chrome, the front seats and an MOT certificate, hopefully, it will be on the road by the time this is published.

The project was by far the most daunting I have ever undertaken and has, at times been very frustrating, but throughout, it has been very satisfying. Parts, where available, have been very expensive at times, surprisingly cheap at others, but the over-riding problem/advantage over rebuilding more modern or more common models is the lack of availability of new parts. As a result, many original items which would have been binned if I had been rebuilding an MGB had to be refurbished and re-used. This was of course very cost effective and the overall cost of the project, including purchase, has been about half the cost of reshelling my MGB.

Some items have required a lot of research, such as the rebuilding of the voltage regulator, using the innards of a new modern (1960s) one, purchased from an autojumble for £8.00; but when you consider the cost of a new reproduction original (£150.00) – a vast saving was made. In other cases I was indebted to specialists such as Don Jackson who rebuilt my early SU fuel pump for a modest £14.50 and to Jim Pollard who sleeved my master cylinder for around one-third the cost of a new one.

The car is not perfect. I refused to lay out nearly £40.00 for special gaskets for the running boards for example, so mine has a non-original type joint, but I hope I have achieved an acceptable and, most importantly, usable standard; since I intend to use the car much as I do the MGB, for long distance runs, touring rallies etc., rather than as a show car.

A final bonus today arrived in the form of my insurance quote, through the M.G. Car Club Abingdon policy – £59.00 fully comp. agreed value – it makes you nostalgic to get an insurance quotation in two figures rather than three or four!

I. C. HAZELL
April 1994

A Y'S BUY

"What is a Y-Type?" our friends used to say,
"If you must have an M.G. then why not an A?
Maybe a T-Type would show you've got flair
Or a lovely old PA would make people stare."

"Tickfords are classy, now one would be great,
So why buy a THING in that terrible state?
We know you like classics," they said from the start
"But for someone with brains that's not very smart."

We did buy a Y-Type, our choice was inspired,
With two teenage children four seats were required.
The price was a factor, our funds were quite tight,
But for comfort and pleasure we got it just right.

A sports car is great on a hot summer's day,
But a good solid roof keeps the raindrops at bay.
With a heater to keep our extremities warm,
Our comfort's assured through frost, snow or storm.

It sounds quite romantic, the wind in your hair,
Streaming behind like an angel so fair.
But the real situation, however one tries,
Is hair knotted and tangled and blown in your eyes.

So give me a roof that can open and close,
Good ventilation not hair up my nose.
A windscreen that opens is also quite good,
And I have a passion for leather and wood.

The jacks are a feature, with hydraulic ease,
They raise all four corners by gentle degrees.
And in the back window that cute little blind
Stops eyes being dazzled by headlights behind.

We're tired of the motorway stresses and strains,
So speed is no issue we like country lanes.
We indulge in nostalgia, I remember the feel
It was in an old Y I first took the wheel.

When we bought our Y, his mum thought us deranged,
Said "UMG letters should be re-arranged,"
But now it's restored and back at its best,
The last laugh is ours, even Mum is impressed.

Yes we own a Y-Type, I'm happy to say,
Despite lots of work we do not rue the day
That we made our choice of a car from the past,
It's part of the family, and long may it last.