

Dennis Doubtfire  
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# Y Type Newsletter

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### Chairmans Chatter - PETER ARNELL

Now that 1999 is nearly a memory, I thought I would give a brief resume of what we, as a Register, have been up to this year. This is partly to try to encourage more of you to join us next year and also because Dennis has asked me to do it!

Our season opener was of course the Y Type Spring Run up in the Cotswolds. This had a very good turnout but still not the magic 50 cars (next year?). The beginning of the day was marred, somewhat, by Jerry Birkbecks unfortunate accident on the way to the start but, nevertheless, we all enjoyed a very scenic run around very pretty lanes and villages.

We had a stand at the Spring Gathering at "Glorious" Goodwood - fortunately the weather held until most people had got home. This was a very attractive venue with several interesting road runs to it and we had a good attendance.

The Regency Run, taking a new route (2, in fact) from Crystal Palace down through rural (at times very rural) Kent and Sussex to Brighton attracted 8 Y types which included 2 YTs.

The Blossom Run in Mid-May took us to Brogdale, home of the National Fruit Collection. It was a pity that, because of the warm Spring, there little blossom left, nevertheless, a very enjoyable day.

A good contingent of Ys took part in the Old Specked Hen Run, centred on Abingdon. Always very popular and oversubscribed, book early if you want to join in next year.

### Len Shaw - DENNIS DOUBTFIRE

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Len Shaw, after a short illness.

Len will be remembered as one of the best Works Rally Drivers. He competed as a privateer pre-war, and later joined M.G., with whom he won countless awards, mainly in his beloved Ys.

Len was a gentleman who was always only too willing to help you out. Many times I asked if we could have Len and his car at an event. The reply was always the same "Certainly Dennis, what time would you like us there?"

My lasting memory of him will be of him standing by HMO 909, with his pipe in his mouth, relating one of his many stories.

Our thoughts go out to Elizabeth, and his family. ■



Silverstone was, as always, very enjoyable and sociable and a trifle wet at times. Neil Cairns, very deservedly, won the NTG Cup.

Unfortunately, we were not able to do the new style Wings Run in mid-June but there was a good turnout, 10 Ys in all.

The following weekend the Mitchell-Gogays and Kelloways upheld honours at the Woodcroft Gathering, and both came away with prizes in the Concours.

At the end of June, a group of us, at the kind invitation of Paul Barrow, joined the Bear and Ragged Staff Informal Concours evening. Although the weather was pretty miserable, there was an excellent turnout including other marques and we all found it a very friendly affair. Try to go next year if you live in that part of the world (near Romsey, Hants).

August was a quiet month, although Jack and Molly Murray and Bill & Lesley Atkinson joined in the 'Compiègne Gourmet Tour' in France and have probably been on a diet ever since.

September saw the South Downs Run from Petersfield to Eastbourne, again well supported and very enjoyable. Limited to around 300 cars and always over subscribed - apparently people start booking as early as February.

Although the day started wet, The Autumn Gathering had 8 Ys and the Kelloways again came away with a prize in the Pride of Ownership.

In all, Yvette, our YB, has covered some 3700 miles over the year, did not win anything but, more important did not break anything. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at events next year (our calendar is being finalised), and in the meantime best wishes for Christmas and for a Happy and Prosperous New Year. ■

## Y Type Carburettor Needles

Peter Arnell carried out painstaking research, and gives interesting information with his figures for SU needle D2 for the H2 carburettor fitted to the Y saloons.

The workshop manual gives needle EF for weaker running and the figures are very close to D2 but with richer points at the third and sixth stages, which might compensate for the rush of air as the piston lifts at quick throttle openings, and also gives slightly richer mixture for cooling at low throttle openings in traffic or after a high speed run.

The factory-recommended EF does give a weaker mixture than D2 in the last third of the opening to full throttle and in my own YB this gives lively response with light throttle openings so that it is necessary to ease back to keep below 65 mph. Top speed is indicated at above 75 mph (speedo figures).

Mileage per gallon has risen from 27.3 on the standard F1 to 33.4 on the FE. Our YB does a healthy mileage with daily use, but the engine is absolutely original with some wear so I normally use 60 mph as top cruise with 10 mph in reserve. For economy I use a 50/50 mix of four star and unleaded.

The advance on the distributor is logical and one that many Y-type owners must have used over the years, but the engine mechanicals are a little noisy in ours so in deference to that I

## The Finishing Touch - JACK MURRAY

Like many classic car owners from all over the world, I set out on the morning of Saturday 11th September for my annual pilgrimage to the Beaulieu Autojumble. For the past few years my visits have lacked the urgency to search out that much sort after part, as the restoration of my car was completed some years ago. My visit was simply an expensive way to top up on gasket paper, cork sheeting and other minor consumables. As much as anything, I'm rather hooked on the event and enjoy soaking up the atmosphere, quite often with the emphasis being on 'soaking'.

However, this year the day dawned brightly and full of promise. I had a small list with me, itemising part numbers to look out for, and somewhere near the bottom of the list was an item that I have been searching for over the last ten years - a 'University Motors' dashboard plaque. "Hen's teeth!" I hear you say. Well, you'd be correct in assuming that they are not easy to find although, over the years, I have come across the odd specimen. Sadly, I am unable and unwilling to part with the sort of money the plaque seems to command. I've seen badly damaged examples with an asking price of £60 and a perfect specimen could set you back treble that amount.

Anyway, on with the tale. Imagine my glee when approaching the third stall of the day, I spotted, inside a glass display case, nestling between a Michelin Man badge and a Watneys Red Barrel key ring (remember those?), a University Motors key ring! Isn't it difficult to ask the price of something you really desire without appearing too enthusiastic? Trying to appear as nonchalant as possible, I enquired of the stall holder how much he wanted for it. He removed it from the case, turned it over to show a ticket marked with an extremely modest price. Now then, I don't know how lottery winners feel, but I suspect that what I was feeling was along the same lines. With sweaty palms I fumbled in my pocket to find the right money before he changed his mind or doubled the price. I walked away from the stall feeling like the cat who'd got the cream. I was still smiling inwardly some hour later when I came across the true object of my desire, (only joking Mollie), in a very similar display case. There it was, in all its glory; a University Motors dashboard plaque.

This time, the price was showing and surprisingly was the sort of money I was prepared to pay. I asked to view the plaque more closely as I was concerned that it was less colourful than it should be. The plaque that I had been searching for should have brightly coloured enamels (dark blue, light blue and red) with a silvered background. The badge resting in my palm was definitely brass in finish without the coloured enamel, but with a black background to the lettered area. Everything else about the plaque rang true. It had a St. Christopher in the centre and a heraldic device on each side of this. Above these were the words 'University Motors Ltd.' and below it read 'Stratton House W1', 'Grosvenor 4141'. It looked like the real McCoy apart from the lack of colour. I enquired whether the

Comparison tables. Needles for 1 1/4" H2 carburettor YA YB

	Standard F1	Weaker D2	Factory Weaker EF
1	.089	.089	.089
2	.085	.085	.085
3	.0825	.0827	.082
4	.079	.0795	.0795
5	.076	.077	.077
6	.073	.0745	.074
7	.075	.0715	.072
8	.0693	.070	.071
9	.0682	.0685	.070
10	.067	.067	.069
11	.0656	.0655	.068
12	.064	.064	.067
13	.063	.0625	.066

Cut off 1 1/4"  
Carburettor

have stuck to TDC at static. I hope to rebuild the top end with new pistons and camshaft next winter and certainly will be following Peter's advice, for I am sure his suggested 6° advance will give a useful power increase. Peter's information that 1/4" at the crankshaft pulley is equal to 6° at the distributor is most useful in assisting this. ■

Philip F Waltham (YB saloon owner) Membership 93978

stall holder knew anything of the plaques' history - perhaps this is a pre-war example, I thought. Sadly he could offer no help regarding its history and no explanation as to the lack of colour. I returned the plaque to the case and told him I would think about it.

It had only taken me time to view another two stalls when it suddenly occurred to me that I was being rather unwise. A ten-year search was almost at an end and I had just rejected one because the colours were missing! Within a few minutes I was the proud owner of a 'University Motors' dashboard plaque. I bumped into several Car Club members during the rest of the day and each one inspected the plaque and gave the opinion that it seemed 'correct' apart from the lack of coloured enamel. There is also no evidence of any damage that would no doubt be caused had the enamel been removed. Can anyone out there provide any help on this subject? Please.

Once I got the badge home, I carefully cleaned it up whilst still looking for the tiniest fleck of coloured enamel - none in evidence. During the cleaning process I wondered as to the significance of the two heraldic shields contained within the badge. Well, having been issued by University Motors' it would be logical to assume that there must be some connection to a seat of learning. Sure enough, a little research revealed that the crests are those of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. As you would expect, the key-ring shares the same crests but in less detail. As to the coloured enamels, seen on other plaques, that highlight the name and address of the company, they are dark blue and light blue, which again reinforces the Oxbridge link. I wonder if the company ever sought permission to use them?

The badge is now firmly attached to the centre of my dashboard and provides the finishing touch to my car. Despite the lack of colour it looks good. In fact, in comparison, the coloured version is a little garish.

During my searches, I have come across plaques that differ in manufacture. Some, like mine, have the St. Christopher medallion cast during the manufacturing process whereas others have a domed St. Christopher that has been glued into a blank area between the two shields. In fact, I came across this version later in the day at Beaulieu. The plaque had suffered quite badly over the years, about half the enamel had broken away and the St. Christopher was missing, exposing a flat brass area.

The key rings presented to new owners also differed in style and design. Mine is a medallion held by a chain to the actual key ring and has a brass coloured background. The reverse is inscribed with the name of the first owner and the date on which her car was purchased. My good friend Bill Atkinson, has an example that has a different fixing to allow the attachment of a leather key fob, and has a silvered background.

If there is anyone out there who can provide me with any information regarding the history of the company and more importantly the origins of my dashboard plaque, I would be most grateful. ■

## A Day Out In The Country - or something like that.

### The Y Register 1999 Spring Rally.

Sunday dawned and I woke to the beginnings of what appeared to be a glorious day. The sun was breaking through as I pottered about getting the TA ready for the Register's first event of the season at Bourton on the Water.

I then undertook the administrative work and decided to adopt the 'Tulip' system of road directions, which I had experienced at first hand during the Enigma Run that Brian Rainbow had organised last July. Jo and I checked this out and confirmed the directions a week prior to the run.

I was very impressed with the neat roadbook that Brian had prepared for the Enigma Run, as all the maps and directions were contained in one document. So, I followed his layout and added to that a kind of CV for each participating car. Again I drew inspiration from another source. Those of you who attended the Morris 8 Series E Register's Diamond Jubilee last October, each received a directory of the vehicles present. I added to this, more information and I would like to thank all of you for completing the details on the application forms. Hopefully, it added interest and provided others with a little more knowledge about colleagues' Y's. I must apologise to Alan Chick for suggesting that his car had not remained in the Cardiff area since it was first registered. Unfortunately, I misread 'Penarth' as Peebles!

To return to the event - just before we left I received a phone call from Keith Herkes, who had just completed the restoration of his 1952 YB (KAX 872) to say that he was flat on his back, following an accident at home, and wouldn't be able to make it. He hopes to be at Silverstone to display another 'new' Y to the Register. Around 8.50 a.m. I drove the TA out of the garage.

Five minutes after leaving home I decided to get some petrol from Sainsbury's in Leamington Spa, where I live, taking advantage of some coupons to buy cheaper fuel. We are driving along a wide road, flanked by elegant Regency houses, at about 25 mph and I can see a stationary black car about 70 metres ahead, waiting at a minor road junction. Less than 5 metres before the junction the car pulls out in front of me - an accident is unavoidable. The result - bruising to Jo, a cut chin for me and my pride and joy sprung water over the road from a perforated radiator. I could not believe it - how could somebody be so stupid - but that of course is the human factor.

For once, I have to say thanks to the mobile phone I purchased, part of the new technology at Christmas for health and safety purposes. On this occasion it was worth its weight in gold! A 999 call to the police, although an ambulance trawling for trade was the first at the scene (for which I received a bill 48 hours later!). I was able to contact the AA and more significantly I managed to contact the British Legion and Dennis and also Richard Dick to arrange to collect the instructions.

The principal event of the day was due to start at 11.00 am. However, by the time Richard, his grandson Alexander and I arrived, it was nearly 11.45. After ensuring that all the participants (31) had roadbooks, rally boards and specially prepared rally plaques, the day began to take shape. Dave Lawrence, author of "Let there be Ys" (the definitive book on Y-types) was over from South Africa, and, aided by Mike Silk (currently finishing off what I am sure will be a superlative restoration of

a YT that he has owned since the early 1970s), sought out the most original Y-type present at the event. By the time this was completed our Chairman Peter Arnell was flagging the entrants off on their 47-mile tour. Dennis displayed several of the Register's wares, including several rare parts, for example original type over-riders and the correct fittings for the Jackall systems, that David Pelham had had manufactured.

Dennis remained at base and welcomed all to the new committee (same as last year - except that Paul Barrow has taken over the Treasurer's duties from Brian Moyses). The rest of us gradually departed and I went with Richard as a sweeper to pick up and help any stragglers. We left near to 1.00 pm - we did, of course, know several short cuts, which was useful at times.

Richard's 1953 YB (USV 420) ran superbly. He mentioned how much better the general road handling was after fitting radial tyres, a point that Eric Dodd (MOB 31) commented upon later. Those of you who have not seen Richard's Y have missed a treat. He found his car over 12 years ago, and other than a total respray and rechrome the car is original and has covered just over 30,000 miles. It is an excellent example of the marque and deservedly won Dave Lawrence's award at the end of the event. It is also a reminder that Ys travel well at 55-60 mph and are more than capable of keeping up with modern traffic, something that is not always appreciated by other road users.

Peter Arnell gave a couple of awards out at the end of the day, to Richard Dick for the most original car (for which he received a signed copy of Let there be Ys), and to Jim and Marion Pritchard (LXV 855) who travelled furthest to the event (Tavistock, Devon), they were given a Sakaguchi spanner.

Fate, being what it is, we completed our three accidents of the day when Andrew Coulsons YA (UMG 473) very gently tail-ended Alan Dinsdale's YB (4972 H) and caused some minor damage.

One aspect of the Y Register and the joy of organising these events is obviously seeing the enjoyment that participants have, seeing those who have become regular attendees and renewing friendships. What I find very disappointing is that a large number of owners who choose not to bring their cars along and share their experiences with other owners. Speaking to Dennis I know that there are well over 80 or more cars that are 'on the road'. It does seem such a shame that more of you seem unable to join in - especially when we all enjoy the benefits of free road tax and relatively cheap insurance. As organisers, we put a lot of time into preparing for an event, and I know that we will soon crack the 50+ Ys at a gathering - perhaps that can be our aim during 2000.

May I suggest that you let your committee know about the value of our opening event of the season and what you expect of it? Is the location inconvenient? Is it the right time of year?, and so on. Please let Dennis know your views. Although, I no longer own a Y, I am still more than willing to organise the Spring Event, which is why we need your views. Finally, Jo and I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for understanding, phone calls and letters of sympathy over our mishap. We are both very touched and appreciative by what has been said and done. ■

Jerry Birbeck

## Photo Finish



Left - Neil Cairns receives the NTG Cup from Dennis Doubtfire at the 1999 Wings Run

Above - Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Y Type in true South African style (with the Y out in front of all the other M.G.s)