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To open this month's "Y" news, we have a photograph of Keith Herkes' 1952 YB, resplendent in ribbons for the wedding of his daughter, Allison. This was in Ramsgate on 19th August this year. Keith's YB had some bad habits, as it smoked rather a lot after an engine rebuild, but this has been cured, and we wait the article on how this was achieved. We wish the happy couple (Allison and her husband, Neil) all the best for the future.



In this issue we look at the "Y" on the Internet; Dennis Doubtfire takes us around the Foulkes-Halbard museum; a corrected Committee list is given, so you know whom to contact; an early drawing of the M.G. 10hp is discussed; and to finish, a tongue-in-cheek look at MOTing your car. Something for everyone. ■

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'Y's on the Internet

Of all the various M.G. models, it is the 'Y' Type that is the least talked about. It seems very few 'Y' owners ever delve into hyperspace, so there are very few web-sites to look at. Oddly enough, I also look after the M.G. Metro Technical Advice for the MGM Club, and the M.G.C.C. F Register, and that generates lots of mail. 'Y' Types, very little.

If you have access to the internet, select the following web-site www.mgcars.org.uk, chose the 'Bulletin page' from the list, and find the 'Y' Type. Click onto it and you will see comments put on by 'Y' owners worldwide. Then compare this short list with the pages and pages of the Metro, Montego, Maestro M.G.s. Why look at this web-site? Simply because it is a way of getting instant information about your car, or advice, or just to chat to other owners. People like myself, who hate telephones interrupting their life, can deal with queries over the email at our leisure. Many others like me, will accept questions direct, and usually answer within a day or so. This M.G. web-site is quite interesting to look through, as it has direct links to lots of other individual sites, including 'Y' owners own private car pictures, etc.

To blow my own trumpet, I have, for years, been giving advice on M.G. engines. An example follows, received by email.

Q. "Some months ago you kindly explained how to tell the correct sparking plug length for an XPAG engine by the number cast into the top of the head. Is there something similar to tell me what the tappet clearances should be. I have a couple of spare heads and their rocker covers but I do not know which belongs to which. Unfortunately one of the covers says the gap should be 12 thou', and the other 19 thou'. What do I look at to decide which is which?"

A. "The tappet clearance is nothing to do with the cylinder head, it is the type of camshaft fitted that determines the clearance required. After about 1951 M.G. fitted a more modern design of cam profile based on a sine-wave form. This later cam only requires a .012" gap. The earlier type of camshaft used the almost universal Morris Wolseley clearance of .019", (even used on their side-valve engines.)

Without removing the camshaft and studying it for part number or markings, you will not know what to use. As a guide, very few old .019" cams still exist, the vast majority are .012" clearance cams. Very few cars still have their original camshaft as it is one part that wears very quickly on the lobes, (along with the rocker shaft itself). There are complex ways of

Y-Type Newsletter

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checking for the right gap, and a simpler one appeared in the *Safety Fast!* some years ago. It was written by a David Clark of Westminster, Vermont, USA. The later cams used an equal-overlap between the inlet and exhaust valves, the timing is 5;45;45;5. The earlier 'Y' cam was a 11;57;52;24. You simply put one of the valves in a particular cylinder on its maximum opening (it is termed 'rocking on the lobe') and measure the other valves gap. Then repeat this with the other valve. If both gaps are almost the same, you have a later equal overlap cam. If not, then it is an earlier cam requiring a .019" gap.

This needs to be done with the tappet clearance set at either 19 or 12 thou. Running a .019" cam with .012" gaps will lose power noticeably, where as running a .012" cam with .019" gaps will sound like a diesel engine.

The fly in the ointment is if someone has fitted a pre-war 1140cc XPJM Morris, or a XPJW Wolseley, 5;45;45;5 camshaft. This used a .019" gap with a 6.5mm lift (at the valve) The XPAG 5;45;45;5 equal overlap cam has an 8mm lift.

Its as easy as that!! ■

The Foulkes-Halbard Nostalgia Museum

Just about a year ago, I had a hankering to revisit the Foulkes-Halbard motor museum at Filching, just outside Eastbourne, Sussex. After a chat with Peter Arnell, we decided to throw the invitation open to members of the Coulsdon, Titchbourne and Talbot Natters.

So it was, that on Sunday 13th August a group of 6 "Y"s, 1 TC, 2 MGBs and a Midget, met up at the Blue Ship pub at the Haven, near Billingshurst. After feasting on bacon butties and coffee, we set off and enjoyed a good run down to Filching.

Lunch was taken on the lawn of the old manor house, after which, the museum owner, Mr Foukes-Halbard, gave us a personally conducted tour of his world - and what a world!! There seemed to be every conceivable make of vehicle represented in some form, and some very unusual models as well.



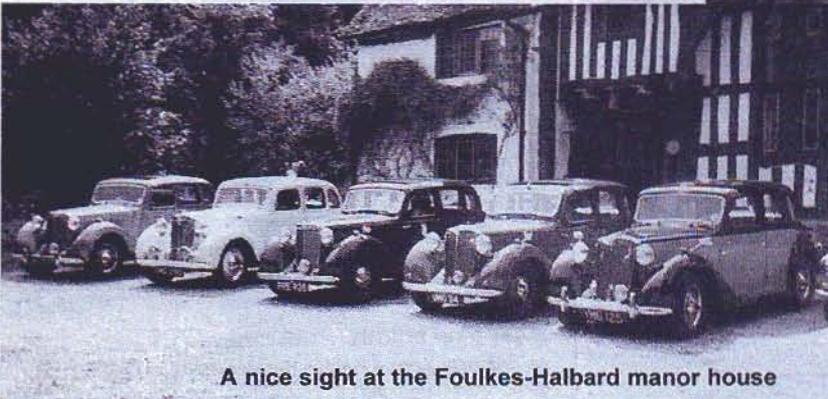
Gotcha!!

Pride of place amongst the exhibits was given to the Campbell dynasty, with Bluebird exhibits everywhere. The only sad thing is, that due to the amount of pilferage he has had, the museum is now only open to pre-arranged personally conducted tour parties, and not to the general public.

Nevertheless, everyone that made the trek, had to agree that it was a great day, and one that other groups would do well to try.

I should like to thank Peter & Suzie Arnell, and Mike & Sue Kellaway for their hospitality and assistance in the planning. ■

Dennis Doubtfire



A nice sight at the Foulkes-Halbard manor house

"Y"s on film



A round up of a few recent photographs

Above Left - A couple of Y Types in amongst T's at this years Regency Run.

Above Right - Rex Harrison's YB "1951 MG", which won a prize at the Anglia Annual Event at Chigwell.

This was an excellent day out, as well as an M.G. show, with 3 Y Types attending.

Below - "Y"s and "Z"s on parade - Saloons at Brooklands for the Spring M.G. Day.



M.G. 10HP Series Saloon, 4 Door - Drawing Number B741, dated 22.04.39

Dennis Doubtfire has come up with a very interesting copy of a drawing of our little M.G.. The title box states the above title, with a heading of "General Body Arrangement". It was drawn in the "Body Dept. Morris Motors Limited, Cowley, Oxford," and initialled "A.J.S."

There are many measurements on it, too fine to read accurately, (the black dots are the arrow ends) but other information written on it tells us the 10HP car's overall length, "with lid open, 167⁵/₁₆ inches". One hundred and sixty seven and five-sixteenths inches). The overall length, "with lid closed, 160³/₄ inches". Just above this is "Tyre Size 525 x 16".

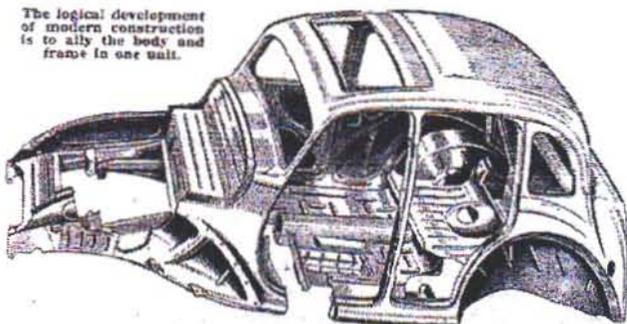
Study the drawing, and you will soon see items that differ from the eventual 1947 'Y' Series that actually appeared in production. The large 'M.G.' in the centre of each wheel disc, (or hub-cap) is prominent. You can see that the fan belt runs just in front of the front axle line, and the front bumper mounting is drawn too far outboard of the chassis rail, and that chassis runs to within a few inches of the front of the car. Then you note that there is a front axle, probably the very item from the Morris Eight series 'E', with which the 'Y' shares its body tub, or the larger Series Ten 'M'.

But the part that grabs the eyes, is those front leaf springs. No wonder the chassis goes to the front, it has to anchor the front end of these items. This drawing shows that it was possible for the new small M.G. saloon to have had old fashioned cart-sprung front wheels. I once ran a 1940 Morris Eight Series 'E', with 19" skinny front wheels. It has to be said it was not the best handling car, nor was it very comfortable. It is a real blessing that M.G. actually used the independent front suspension (ifs) originally designed for the mono-construction Morris Ten, Series 'M'. The 'M' got the 'cart springs' as these were cheaper. Our 'Y' has its chassis ending at the pressed steel cross member that houses the coil springs, the forward extension is bolted on, very similar the later MGA. As is well known, the 'Y's ifs went on in various forms on M.G.s till the RV8.

Gerald Palmer says in his autobiography (Magna-Press) that the 'Y' was originally designed with ifs, but went to leaf springs as it was cheaper. This front beam axle had a brake-torque tube fitted, and had the war not intervened, the 'YA' would have used it. As it was, the car was late, and the original ifs was used. Thank Goodness. There is no sign of any torque tubes on this body drawing, such an item would be shown on a chassis drawing.

Sketches of the Morris Ten Series 'M' are shown (note there is no chassis) just to see what the 'Y' could have had fitted at its front end. Note the anti-roll bar that runs parallel to the leaf spring, also acting as a brake torque arm, stopping the axle twisting under braking. I suspect the 'YA' and the 'M' swapped complete systems, but they left out the anti-roll bar until the 'YB'. ■

The logical development of modern construction is to ally the body and frame in one unit.

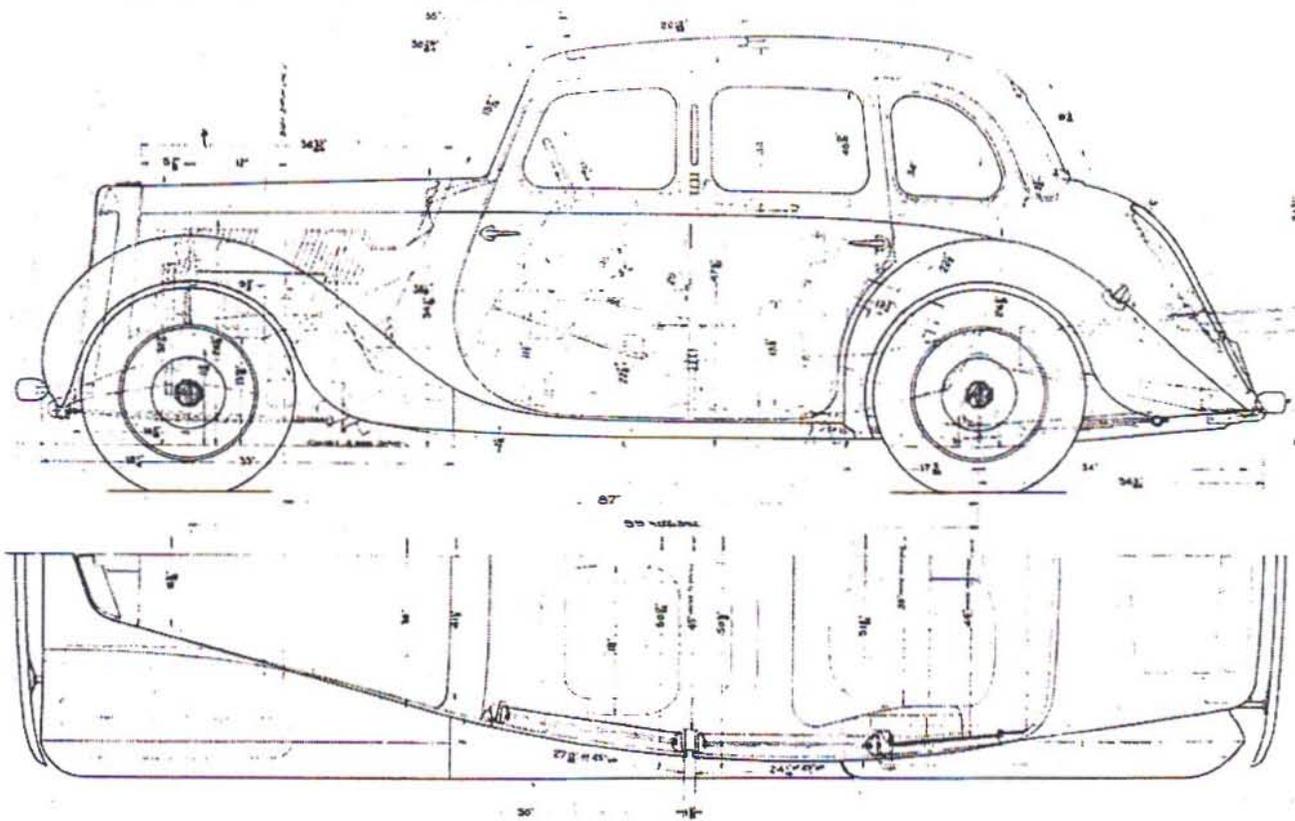
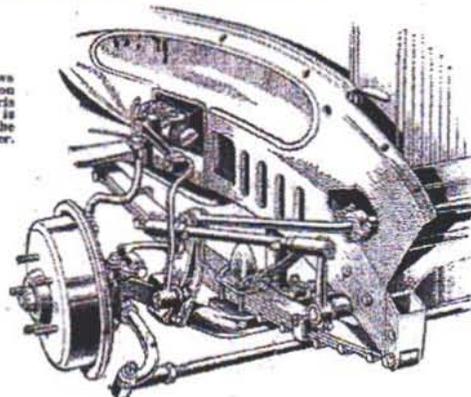


This picture shows how it is done in the case of the Morris Ten, the engine being bolted forward to the dash and the springs and axles bolted direct to the single body frame units.

Above - The Morris Series M monocoque hull, not too dissimilar to the Y's shape.

Below - The Morris Series M front suspension M

The drawing shows the front suspension layout of the Morris Ten car which is referred to in the text of this chapter.



MOTing a "Y" Type (or any other older car)

If you run a M.G., the chances are more often than not it will be a 'modern' version, such as the Spridget, MGB, Metro, or similar. These cars are not so old as to be out of the experience of some 'older' examiners at Mot stations. This means they will know where to look for common areas of Mot faults. Ever since the "Ten Year Test" of all motor cars back in 1959, costing just ten shillings, (50p but probably more like £25 in actual value) was introduced to rid the roads of dangerous cars, owners have fretted once a year. More than any other motoring legislation, this law was responsible for clearing thousands of pre-war cars off our roads, many now rare M.G.s went to the scrap yard.

About two years ago, the 'Mot' Testers manual was re-written. MOT once stood for Ministry of Transport, today it is the Department. "Do" test does not sound right though. Lots of the earlier 'checks' were simply left out, as so few cars now existed to comply with them. The 'rules' still exist in law, the manual just does not mention them. For instance, after 1953 everyone had to fit two rear red-reflectors to their car. This was a retrospective legislation, so pre-1953 cars had to have them retro-fitted. Post '53 cars often incorporate them into the rear lamp lenses. Today you would get away with not having any, as they have been forgotten, (unless the examiner remembers!). The 'Y' never had rear reflectors fitted at the factory for the UK market. Also, it is an offence to have an interior mirror that is not in a frame. All 'Y' types have unframed interior mirrors as standard when new, but few examiners can remember the legislation that was brought in to prevent serious facial injuries, as today a seat belt would prevent you hitting the mirror.

Seat belts have to be fitted in accordance with the Construction and Use Regulations. This only applies to cars made after a certain date. But if they are fitted to any car, there are rules about the belt anchorages. To fit seat belts to a 'Y' with wooden floor boards, and a body held to a chassis by eight bolts, is very risky. It can be done, but specially strengthened areas need to be welded to the chassis. Just look at the younger examiner's face as he searches for those seat belts, until he realises there are none.

About 1970 the law was introduced to have all cars fitted with windscreen washers, another retrospective law that applied to all earlier models. There are however, exceptions. Cars with opening windcreens need not be so fitted, ie, early Landrovers. The 'Y's windscreen opens, but I bet quite a few of you have been asked how to work the 'washers'. And watching an examiner trying to work the windscreen wipers is very amusing. He eventually twists the bakelite knob to get the drivers side wiping, but looks perplexed as how to get the passenger side one to join in. The law states that the screen needs to be wiped over certain areas, for the 'Y' to pass its Mot, both wipers must work as the screen in one piece across the car. If you had an early Morris Minor series MM, or series 2, with a split-windscreen, only the glass on the drivers side would require a wiper. It is classed as two separate windows on this model!

Indicators are next, but the examiner searches in vain for them. There are none as we all know. 'Y' types have semaphore units in the

'C' posts, worked from a clockwork rotary switch in the centre of the steering wheel. You enlighten him, but after working alright the nearside one fails to drop back into the post. A thump on the 'C' post cures it and it drops out of sight with a clunk. Then he tries the lights, and gives up trying to dip them having searched the steering column in vain looking for a finger switch. He only found a chrome knob that adjusted the steering wheel height. Then he finds the poorly placed dip switch, hidden well above the drivers left foot. He operates it, but cannot then get his foot out from under the clutch pedal. As he pulls his trapped foot out having taken his shoe off to do so, he notices the clutch pedal moves about a little, and the brake pedal copies it. You explain they both run on the same concentric shaft, just like an early Morris Minor, but not like the sister model the TD/TF. There must be no interference between the two pedals, meaning the pivot must not be so worn as to let the pedals hit one another. This is not checked as the examiner has no experience of such a pedal system.

Checking the headlamp alignment shows up one a bit high on main beam. You grab hold of the headlamp and simply twist it a little on its mounting, till the beam falls on the line on the mirror. No stripping down headlamp cowls, or trying to turn rusted up plastic knurled nuts as on other 50s and 60s cars.

Time to check the brake system efficiency arrives, and the examiner carefully studies the copper pipe-work running under the car on its chassis. After a few minutes he frowns, as the pipes seem to terminate at some odd tubes bolted upright. He has just inspected your JACKALL system, and mutters to himself over older cars. He was looking for a set of cable brakes, and is surprised at the 'modern' hydraulic system he eventually finds. The bonnet is opened to check the master cylinder. It took some time for the poor fellow to master the bonnet clips, and now he cannot find the master cylinder. He studies the Jackall pump and fluid reservoir, but dismisses it. His pride dented, he asks you where it is. As on virtually all early Morris, Wolseley, and M.G. cars so fitted, the cylinder is under the floor, so you smile and show him. Later on the brake check on the rollers, he is very surprised at the efficiency of the YB's front brakes, that actually give better readings than some disc fitted cars, (ie 1980's Minis with discs but no servo). At low speeds, cold twin-leading-shoe (t/s) front drum brakes are very good. Alas all drum brakes suffer from fade once overheated, where as discs cool themselves better and are more efficient then. YAs and YTs have single-leading-shoe (s/s) brakes like 1959-63 Minis. These are less efficient and cheaper as only one slave cylinder per wheel is required. The handbrake, being an excellent Nuffield 'twin cable' design, unlike modern flimsy versions, locks up the rear wheels when applied. The rollers continue to grind away your tyre tread for a few seconds, but then record almost 100% efficiency on the machines gauge.

Your "Y" did not get its first Mot test until 1959, if it was a pre-1949 model, as the early testing system was for cars over ten years of age. Today it is 3 years, and the test covers a massive amount, unlike the earlier 'cycle-parts'; ie, brakes, steering, and tyres. Your Mot test takes only half as long as a modern car, but it still costs you £30. Never mind, you were entertained. Good Luck. ■

NC

I hope this edition of our 4-pager titillated your interests. Do remember that I still need your input to the monthly notes, and these much larger 4-page centre spreads.

Books on "Y's" are none too plentiful. The Register has quite a wide stock of those available (contact David Hague). Others worth looking out for are; "M.G. The Untold Story" by David Knowles, which has quite a few snippets on the "Y"; The Workshop Manual, published by the MGOC, reprinted by Haynes from the original Nuffield Press (only covers the YA) - there is no mention of the YB front brakes, rear axle, horns, dampers and electrical items. The most interesting one I have read so far has to be "Let There Be "Y's" by David Lawrence, with John Lawson's "M.G. Y Type Saloons and Tourers" a close 2nd.

To finish off, I'll leave you with technical tale, originally destined for the T Type notes, from Barrie Jones, but it suits all cars, including Ys.

Rotor arms

What an embarrassment. Last week I had to call out the RAC because my M.G.TF1500 had broken down - twice. The first time, I went through all the usual checks, and quickly came to

the conclusion that the rotor arm in the distributor was earthing.

Fortunately, I always carry a spare, so I replaced it and carried on with my journey. Less than an hour later, on the way home, there was a small backfire and the engine immediately died again. Since a sudden stoppage normally indicates an electrical fault, I went through my routine again, and found that the replacement rotor arm had also broken down. So I called out the RAC, and asked them to bring me a rotor arm for an early Mini. They may look different, but I know that they are a straight replacement and much easier to obtain than the original 1950s Lucas item.

How do you test the rotor arm? Simple! First you disconnect the king lead from the centre terminal of the distributor cap and hold it near a metal part of the engine. Hold it with a pair of insulated pliers to avoid a shock. If you then operate the starter you should see a spark between the end of the cable and the engine. This confirms that the coil and the points are working correctly. Now take off the distributor cap and hold the end of the king lead immediately above the rotor arm. When you operate the starter there should be no spark. If there is a spark, then the rotor arm is shorting to earth, so it needs replacing. ■