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NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME TO THE Y TYPE NEWSLETTER

We are living in very strange and worrying times as the pandemic and international events have affected everyone's life. Surprisingly, it has had some benefits as there has been a noted upturn in leisure activities. This was especially so in the first national lockdown. Many folk had that rare commodity – time – at their disposal. However, it came with significant downsides. Over the last nine months our personal freedom to meet up with friends and colleagues has been subject to, at times, bizarre restrictions. So, as you are all aware car shows, events and meetings have been cancelled and travel has been restricted.

Worldwide, we have become aware of meetings through Zoom, a concept that probably the majority of us had never heard of, and the novelty of 'working from home' where possible.

So what have we done?

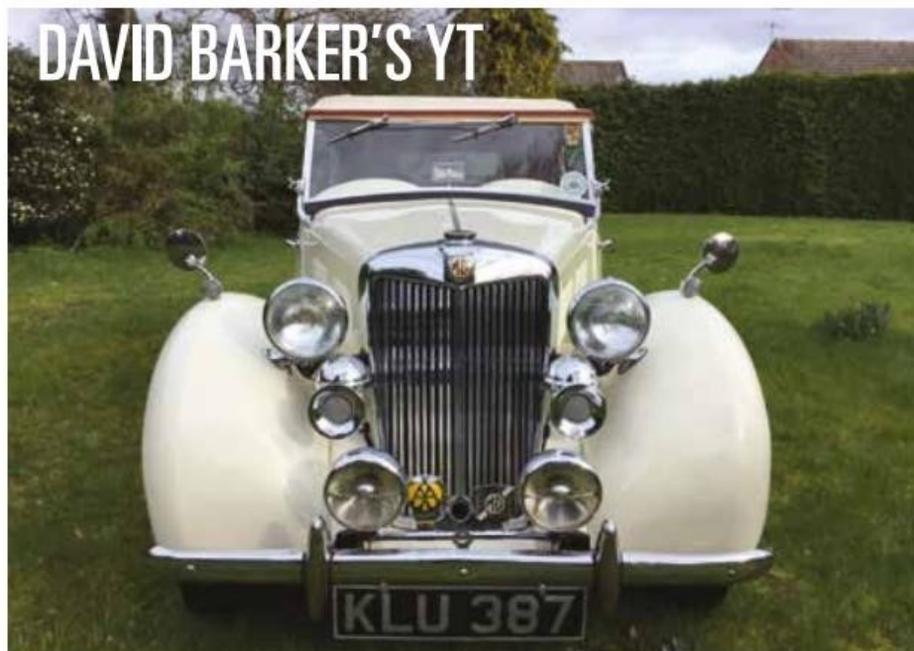
Decorating, home improvements, gardening, walking, reading and a wide variety of other activities. There have been several

fascinating hobbies that Club Members have mentioned, well outside maintaining and repairing their beloved MG. Many of you will have seen these on the Internet. This newsletter is of course about MG Y Types and though I have struggled for copy, primarily because of so few events over the last year, I have for your interest three pieces covering our models. Hopefully, you will enjoy them!

Please do look after yourselves, family, friends and neighbours and to use the current mantra... "Stay safe". Theoretically, after you receive your issue of *Safety Fast!* we will be looking a few days ahead to escape from Lockdown two. However, who knows?

Despite all this I would like to wish you all a happy Christmas... although from what we have found to date, it will be very different!

Jerry Birkbeck



Dave's YT was well known in the MG world when it was acquired in 2002 by the late Tony Stock and his wife Jill. The background is fascinating and Tony mentioned in the Y Register website under 'Owners and their Cars' about some of the history of the car, which I have reproduced here.

YT EXR 2617 was first registered from new on April 20 1949 by John Urbane Bull, a coffee planter from Kenya, on his retirement, having purchased the car in dollars directly from the MG Car Company. The bodywork was originally red.

John Bull appears to have been an interesting individual who extolled the virtues of his YT in a series of articles for *Autocar* during 1950. One has to remember that motoring magazines were not as prolific as they are now. There was an understandable emphasis on maintaining your car through magazines like *Practical Motorist*. General motoring was highlighted through magazines such as *Autocar* and *The Motor* and not forgetting, of course, Bill Boddy's *MotorSport*.

I have extracted a few lines from John Urbane Bull's visit to North Wales which he covered in an article in the June 30 1950 issue of *Autocar*. Considering that 70 years ago petrol was still rationed (until 1951) one might wonder how he was able to obtain the fuel! That I can't answer.

Our explorer was keen to see the sights of North Wales on a motoring holiday from Cambridge to Chester and Conway and then home. A distance of over 350 miles round trip, which is nothing today but on the UK highways and byways was most certainly a challenge. He commented >>



A few of the Autosport pages, showing the YT on its travels.



Dave's YT as it is today



on his desire to return to Wales, where in his youth he had enjoyed roaming, rock climbing and swimming and was determined to return.

"Our new one and a quarter litre MG would have gone there of its own accord, had it been possessed of a free will. Cars are like that. There are those

that are meant to be driven along safe, smooth roads, mainly in built-up areas and preferably with the occupants soberly attired. Not so the MG; something tougher and more exacting was demanded and above all how are they to keep up with the current conception of sports-car types?"

He went on to describe crossing "the wild Llanberis Pass... and after several days of heavy rain we decided to return to Wales along the A5 to Cambridge".

He was of course keen to extol the virtues of the YT. He wrote: "I would say that the one and a quarter litre MG Tourer is nearly, if not entirely, a car that cruises at 60mph. A magical phrase 'cruise at 60', but for a small car it becomes even more magical. Under even conditions the speedometer reached about 75, or perhaps slightly higher."

He concluded his review by noting that "the road-holding qualities are so good as to be beyond praise. I enjoyed being able to place my car on the road with complete accuracy. It is a car with personality, and as such to be cared for at a time when cars are tending to lose that personality".

It is fascinating to read the experiences of the owner of a new YT and I am sure that many of us are just as enhanced with similar feelings when driving our own Y.

The car passed through several owners in the late 50s and 60s and advertised by one of them in *Motor Sport* April 1968 for £35. It was bought in the early 1970s by John Finch, who restored the car over a number of years and was a successful concours entrant from 1980 onwards.

Tony saw the car advertised in *Safety Fast!* in August 2002 and it was used as regular, everyday transport. The only problems that he experienced were the starter motor chucking its pinion adrift on several occasions and the brake pedal cross shift stripping its splines.

The YT has a different body colour which is like a Rover Old English White,

and ventilated 'Derrington (?)' wheels. An additional driving lamp and chrome horns were fitted by John Finch during restoration.

Tony kept the car until his death in 2014. It was sold by the family some years later and Dave acquired the car in exchange for a 3.8 Jaguar saloon. Dave has been running a trimming

business since his retirement and, as the photographs show, he has undertaken an excellent complete retrim of the interior and recovered the side screens and fitted a new hood.

I am grateful to Dave for providing me with the background information about his YT.

Jerry Birkbeck

REFITTING YT DOORS

I bought my YT at the turn of the century and have always tried to improve her during the winter months. Last year I had the bottom half of my boot lid reskinned and I touched up all round the front end with the remains of the paint. So, come last spring, she was all set for the new season looking quite a bit smarter. Then lockdown hit us. As one door closed another opened and I decided to refit the doors and touch up the paintwork to make good use of the unexpected off road time.

95% of my driving is with the top down, so the large gaps around the bottoms of the doors have not really been a problem. However, the paintwork was crazed and tatty round the edges and the fit was uneven, whilst the hinges had been painted over what was left of the chrome. Restoration was well overdue.

The doors came off quickly and the first job was to refit them so that the rubber seal just made contact with the door surround. I had read how T Type owners had replaced the internal diagonal steel strap with a tensioning strap and I found the ideal fitting for this at a ships' chandlers. They were stainless steel and made for tightening the rigging on a yacht.



The picture shows their quality, and they were remarkably cheap at £12.79. The left and right hand threads made adjustment very simple and the doors were easily pulled in to fit. The passenger door only, for some reason, required 3mm aluminium shims to be added behind the hinges; this reduced the gap at the front.

Once I was happy with the new fit on both doors, I sent the hinges away to be re-chromed and started to tidy up the paintwork on the doors. It didn't take me long to decide that it was a job for the professionals and the doors were



taken off to be stripped and resprayed. This left me with the door surrounds to tidy up. The surround trim came out and revealed plenty of work. My tin of touch-up paint was again used, and with the use of a good quality, wide artist's brush I managed to achieve a respectable finish.



I collected the doors, and the result was well worth the £500 spraying cost. The newly chromed hinges (£14.50 each) were fitted, as were the freshly cleaned door cards. Refitting the doors required a fair bit of adjustment as the door cards hadn't been in place on the previous fitting. Finally all the screws were replaced with polished head stainless steel ones, and the job was done.

All ready for the open road... and Oh No! yet another lockdown.

Peter Vielvoye



THE FLYING MIDGE

One of the most photographed items on our YT is the 'flying midge' that is fitted to the radiator cap. The 'midge' is a mascot that has adorned MG for many years. It certainly is an eye catcher. Douglas Pelton who produces stainless steel replicas wrote in the October 2011 edition of the MG T society of the history. "It was not a product produced by the MG Car Company but by an H.J. Randall of Birmingham and was designed especially for MG car owners. It first appeared in an advertisement in the May 1934 issue of *The Magazine*. It was only found on 1935 P Type, according to automobile historian Mike Worthington-Williams, although it did appear in factory literature and was primarily sold

as an accessory by University Motors Ltd, London, acting as an MG Agent. '

Originals are much sought-after, but Doug Pelton has produced a fine replica.

It rests on either the YT or TC depending upon which car we are using. A stylish addition, though not everyone's cup of tea!

Jerry Birkbeck

THE CHROME EMBELLISHERS

Our YT was built in January 1950 and exported from the factory to the USA and an MG dealer in New York by the name of J S Inskip. Inskip was an importer of high-quality UK cars and in particular he focused on Rolls-Royce, modifying them to meet his customers' aspirations. He became a New York dealer for

the marque during the late 1930s through to the late 50s. In his Manhattan showroom he widened his range and became a distributor not only for Rolls-Royce but also Bentley, Riley and MG. In 1950 he marketed a four-seat TD on a lengthened wheel base.

It appears that the chrome embellishers along either side of the bonnet and both doors were only fitted by Inskip. Another individual feature on our YT.

Jerry Birkbeck

