

## Meet the Owner - Terry Staines and his MG YT



It goes without saying that Terry's Renault Alpine GTA was one of the stars of the 2024 Lancaster Insurance Motor Show – but it is not the only member of his fleet. The Staines collection also includes a 1950 YT, an MG from the 'Export or Die' era and one of the most charming cars from Abingdon.

MG unveiled the YA saloon in May 1947, combining a body derived from the Morris Eight Series E with the TB's XPAG 1250cc OHV engine, albeit in single carburettor form, rack & pinion steering, and independent front suspension – a 'first' for the marque. In 1948, MG introduced the YT version at the London Motor Show, and it was the last factory-built four-seater convertible to wear the

octagon badge.

The YT shared a bonnet, grille, front and rear wings, and boot lid with the Y saloon but was powered by the TC's twin carburettor unit, resulting in a 76-mph top speed. Other differences included round, as opposed to octagonal, dials, and the YT featured a telescopic steering column, and a windscreen that could be folded flat. North American versions also had flashing indicators. The colour choices were black, Shires Green, Regency Red, Sequoia Cream, or Clipper Blue. There is also a Jackall jacking system and Terry points out: "Access is under the bonnet and the Jackall pump is mounted on the N/S of the bulkhead".

The Nuffield Group emphasised the YT was

“designed for the export market” - a vital consideration for any car maker at that time. In February 1948, the Minister for Supply, George Strauss, announced that steel would be reserved for those manufacturers who sold more than 75 per cent of their output abroad. The 1949 Nuffield brochure warned the YT was “available only for export”.

Abingdon initially hoped the USA would be the YT’s principal market and promised well-heeled American buyers it “looks and behaves like the MG thoroughbred it is”. Some, but not all, YTs destined for the States had flashing indicators. Terry notes: “Not every American Y-Type had flashers; it was dependent on individual state legislation and, if necessary, was a dealer fit, not factory. Some dealers also fitted chrome strips along the bonnet and a curved chrome spear down the door to ‘bling’ them up for their customers”.

However, only 251 LHD examples left the factory, and Australia proved to be the most successful market, with sales of 325. When YT

production ended in 1950, 874 had been exported, with a mere 42 for domestic customers. <https://www.mg-cars.org.uk/> observes “other British manufacturers were also having problems selling open tourer versions of their saloons”. As for Terry’s MG, it is unusual in being an RHD model that spent much of its life in Florida, returning to the UK in 2014.

And today, the YT is both rare and highly desirable; the sort of open tourer you can imagine being driven by a young Terry-Thomas. It also illustrates Abingdon’s sense of ambition, producing a car to rival Sunbeam-Talbot and Riley. As the brochure put it, the YT was “Maintaining the Breed...With A New Thoroughbred MG Tourer”.

### With thanks

*With thanks to Terry Staines and <https://classicandsportscar.ltd.uk/> for permission to use the images in this blog.*

