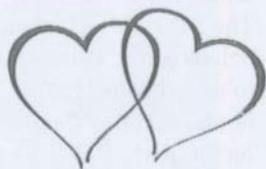




MG YB WEDDING CAR



My daughter Rachel married Alan Reynard on 6 April 2013 at the New Holmwood Hotel, Gurnard, Isle of Wight. My YB (0279) - aka UMG 576 - was her choice for bridal transport, and the Father of the Bride also took the role of chauffeur. A 1955 Humber Hawk, owned by a friend from the local Vectis Historic Car Club, provided transport for the three Bridesmaids and my wife, Mother of the Bride.

The day was perfect - one of the few sunny days that we had seen so far this year. The weekends before and after were atrocious weather-wise.

Those familiar with the Y Type will know that the cars are not noted for the generosity of legroom in the rear - or the front for that matter - even with the front seat fully forward. Consequently, they are not ideal as wedding cars. Although Rachel is relatively short at just over 5 feet, I was concerned about getting her into the back of the YB in full wedding regalia.

My first thought was to remove the front passenger seat and leave it at home. However, the car had to return the Father and Mother of the Bride and the Chief Bridesmaid (bride's sister) home on the morning after the wedding. The Mother was not happy about having to sit in the

back without the front passenger seat in place. Frankly, neither was I, as there are no seat belts or airbags in a Y Type. So, another option was called for.

I decided to move the passenger seat runners forward so that the seat could be moved further forward than intended. In order to avoid having to return them to their original position, I set the seat in its 'usual' position - a compromise between legroom at the front and rear. My wife, the usual front passenger is quite short, so I could be reasonably generous with the rear seat legroom. I then counted the notches from this position and the maximum rearward movement.

This showed that I could move the runners forward by an extra 3" without affecting the normal passenger seat position. 3" might not sound much, but it does make a noticeable difference to the room in the rear of the car. Rachel managed to get into and out of the car comfortably on the day, as can be seen from the photo.

An incidental benefit of this modification was that the seat now slides easily on the runners. The reason for earlier difficulty in moving the seat turned out to be the alignment of the runners - the previous owner had fitted them with about 1/4" 'toe-in'. I refitted them parallel, which makes

it much easier to move the seat!
The YB behaved impeccably and delivered the Bride and the Father safely to the wedding venue. However, this was not achieved without considerable anxiety on my part.

Due to the notoriously wet winter of 2012-13, I did not use the car much. The first time I took it out this year, I suffered a few misfires. The engine cut out completely on one occasion, although I got it restarted quite quickly. I initially put the problem down to lack of use and possibly the fuel and hoped it would sort itself out. WRONG! I took it out again and it died completely. Only after leaving it for about an hour and considerable tinkering did it restart and brought my wife and me home.

Knowing that the wedding was only a month away, I started to worry. I know brides are supposed to be late for their wedding, but I had already been warned that the Registrar would not wait. Mild panic set in and I had nightmares about failing to reach the wedding venue. I decided that I could take no chances for my daughter's big day, and set about checking and replacing anything and everything that could possibly be responsible for the misfiring.

On the fuel side, I removed and cleaned the filters in the fuel pump, stripped and cleaned the carburettor, checked the fuel lines and even drained the fuel tank. I would have been pleased to find some trace of water in the fuel, but there was none. Nonetheless, I filled the tank with new fuel. I have since used the old fuel to cut my lawns without any problems! I then turned to the ignition and fitted new spark plugs, contact breaker points,

condenser and distributor cap. I was confident about the HT leads because I had replaced them all with new copper cable last year. I tested the ignition coil and found it satisfactory. I carefully set the points gap and the ignition timing.

Then for the road test, with some trepidation. I took the car out on numerous occasions during the next two weeks for different journey lengths, including a run to the wedding venue to check the journey time. During these runs, I made several fine adjustments to the carburettor to get a smooth tick over. The car never missed a beat.

The only visible fault that I found during the work was a small chip on the inside of the distributor cap, where the carbon brush sits. I can only conclude that this was causing the misfiring and cutting out. I remember many years ago, I had a Hillman Imp that was prone to stopping for no apparent reason, only to start again after an hour or so. I eventually found the cause when it happened on a dark night and I dropped my torch while turning the engine from the solenoid button in the engine bay. I noticed a spark tracking along an invisible crack in the distributor cap. After I fitted a new cap, the problem never recurred.

I suppose I will never know for certain what caused the misfiring and the worry. The old lady (the YB) did me - and Rachel- proud on the day. She certainly drew many admiring glances in the venue car park after the ceremony.

Originally published in *The Bulletin*,
December 2013 / January 2014.
The Bulletin is the official publication
of the MG Octagon Car Club.

