

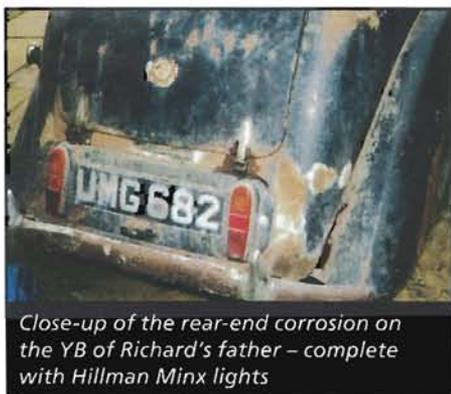
Enjoying MG is the official magazine of the MG Owners Club

When I was growing up, my father had a YB in the garden. As kids we used to play in it, under the tarpaulin. In the late 1990s I was working in a supermarket and one day Paul Barrow, who today is webmaster of the International MG Y-type Register, drove into the car park in his Y-type. I spoke to him, and next day he came with Jack Murray, a well-known figure in the Y-type world. We looked at my father's car and decided it was too far gone to be restored. I still have it, but it's now been dismantled for parts, so it no longer exists, really.

As a result in 2004 I bought another YB to restore. Again I still have it, but I have never got around to restoring it. I need to make a decision. It's too good to get rid of, but it will cost too much to restore. You have to be realistic. Meanwhile, in 2005 I acquired a third YB – my first driveable Y-type.

The next year I took it off the road for a respray, as the paint was pretty poor. I stripped the car to the bare metal, and it turned out to be worse than I thought. Not least, all four doors were badly rusted. I could have just had new metal let in, but I didn't want a bodged repair, so I had four new door skins made from scratch. The sills needed some repairs to the box sections, and the bodyshop did some lead-loading around the rear quarters. Thankfully the area around the spare-wheel compartment was sound – this is often rusted.

The interior was more than usable. The lady who had owned the car before did some re-trimming, and there were new door cards but still with the original pockets; the woodwork was original. I had the seats re-done – rescued, really – by the Leather Repair Company in Hull. They were brittle and hard, and had been painted. They took the paint off the leather with wire wool, back to the original colour, and fed it with plenty of hide food. On the driver's side there was a little hole, and this was repaired. So I still have the original seats, but with a lovely patina. Replacing the headlining, which is original, is a notoriously difficult job. But Jack Murray wrote a booklet on how to do the job, and with the help of this I managed to put it back.



Close-up of the rear-end corrosion on the YB of Richard's father – complete with Hillman Minx lights



The interior, ravaged by humidity: storing outside under a tarpaulin isn't good for a car



The doors were given new skins; otherwise the body was mainly sound



Richard's YB on the ferry to the Outer Hebrides



In a previous part re-trim the original door pockets had been saved

MADE FOR USING

The owner of both a YB and a YF tourer, **Richard Knight** isn't frightened to put the miles on his cars



I've been using the YB since 2008 and it has been pretty reliable, although I did have a problem when I had the engine-rebuilt by a chap working from home and supposedly a specialist in these engines. We ended up having the job done twice, because he'd used bent pushrods.

I've taken the car to Holland, to Belgium, to Germany for two Y-type rallies, and to France, and up to the Outer Hebrides, where my wife's parents live, on South Uist. We went to Holland in May this year for the 75th anniversary of the Y-type and did over 1000 miles without any hitches.

I bought my YT from Holland in 2012. It was originally supplied to Australia, which took 325 YTs – more than any other country. Only 877 were made, between 1948 and 1950, and almost all were exported. As a result, there aren't too many YTs about, and I'd been looking for one for a while. There was someone in the Winchester MGOC who had one and with its twin-carb engine it always seemed a little faster. For longer trips I thought it would be good, and would also give me fresh-air motoring and be a complement to the YB. I've had both cars set up on the rolling road, and in fact the performance difference isn't drastic.

I still remember my second trip to Germany, in 2014 in the YT, when it took 12 hours to get to Dover from the New Forest, thanks to an overheating issue: every 20–30 miles we had to stop to let the car cool down. We eventually found that the fan blades were loose. We secured them but the car carried on overheating. The water pump had given up the ghost and I think the radiator was partly blocked, so we ended up calling out the recovery services.

The YT is as I bought it. Eventually I'll get it resprayed but I'm not in a mad rush – it's perfectly acceptable. It's been pretty reliable, other than that early overheating episode. Last year we went to the Outer Hebrides in it and got up there in four days with no issues. On the return, after an early start, we did Dumfries to Southampton in a day, getting home by 6pm.

Both cars are standard, apart from a high-level LED brake light, and are happy cruising at anything between 45mph and 55mph. I don't push it. Long journeys aren't too bad – it's just that sometimes you need to get out and stretch your legs. I don't feel any urge to upgrade the cars. An original car is my preference. MGB discs? Where do you draw the line? You change one thing, and then you change something else. Are you driving the car you wanted to buy in the first place? My view is that so long as the car is regularly maintained and driven as it was designed to be driven, then there shouldn't be a need.

Parts aren't a problem. I've accumulated a lot myself, including stuff I've found on eBay, and NTG are good for new parts. It's a godsend that there's somebody doing

Y-type parts. The YT is a sister car to the 1947–51 YA, and parts for these are less easy. The YB – made between 1951 and 1953 – shares items such as the braking system with the TD and TF, and is better provided-for, as well as having better brakes.

If you fancy a Y-type, my advice is nothing out of the ordinary: do your research on the car in question, and remember that in the long run it is cheaper to buy a car that has been restored. That said, if you take a car back to the bare metal, you never know what you'll find. Finally, don't be frightened about using the car. If you break down, the worst thing that can happen is that you'll end up waiting by the roadside for a few hours. You have to be positive about things. 🍀



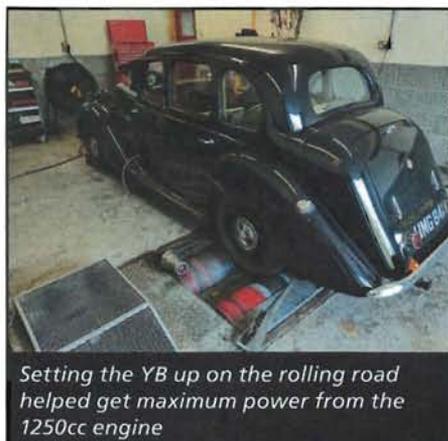
The wood dashboard has remained in good order; the car was originally supplied by University Motors



One of the front seats after restoration, showing what can be achieved



The engine in the YB is a single-carb unit; just below the coil is the pump for the Jackall integral jacking



Setting the YB up on the rolling road helped get maximum power from the 1250cc engine



On the Ardnamurchan peninsula in the Highlands of Scotland



A line-up of Y-types on the 2013 Sommertreffen (Summer Rally) in Germany, at Remscheid



The YT in repose, beside a Scottish loch