



# The Classic 'Y'



Issue No.176 October 2003

## The Newsletter of The M.G. "Y" Type Register

### Storage tips for the T-Series MG

Over the years, I have read several articles on what to do when you store your precious MG for the winter or for an extended period of time. One of the best lists I have seen was included in the October 1993 issue of the Can-Am Connection put out by the Windsor-Detroit MG Club. The following list is a combination of accumulation of acquired knowledge and "gently" plagiarized articles.

1. Change the oil and filter. Some folks recommend using a break-in oil as it adheres to the metal surfaces better and others will suggest using an inexpensive oil and overfilling the crankcase just for winter storage. I have not found any written information on using new long term additives like Slick-50 in our MGs but I have heard several verbal comments against their use.
2. Clean the car thoroughly, inside and out. Take a brisk drive to blow the water out of nooks and crannies to insure the car is completely dry.
3. While you're out, fill up with good quality petrol and add a can of Stabil (purchased at your local auto parts or hardware store). I have found storing the car full is much more effective for preventing tank rust. However, some places require the gas to be drained so follow the rules.
4. Repair nicks and scratches, then wax the painted surfaces and apply a thin coat of petroleum jelly to the chrome. Rub in a coat of your favorite leather care product to the interior. If you can, I recommend removing the seats and storing them in a cool dry place. If your car is stored where there is a possibility of having a mouse or two move in for the winter, I suggest spreading some moth balls around the interior areas.
5. Once you're at the place of storage, inflate the tyres to approximately 50 psi. Elevate the car on jack stands being careful to place the stands in such a manner that the road springs take the weight of the car. If you leave your car on the floor, place a couple of carpet squares under each tyre. In this scenario it is increasingly important to increase the tyre pressure, but don't forget to return the pressure to normal levels prior to your first drive next spring.
6. Lubricate all suspension and steering components and wipe off any excess moisture.
7. Check the anti-freeze. It's a good idea to renew this fluid every other year to maintain its corrosion and anti-rust qualities.
8. Remove the sparking plugs and squirt about 2 tablespoons of clean engine oil into each cylinder. Crank the engine over with the starter motor (ignition off) for 6 - 8 seconds to spread the oil around. Replace the sparking plugs.
9. Remove the battery and store it in a cool dry place. You should charge the battery every 30 - 45 days. Don't forget to check the fluid level, even on so-called maintenance-free units, as evaporation can occur over time.
10. Remove the fan belt and store in a cool dry place to prevent it from drying out in an oval shape, losing its flexibility. This is a new one for me and one of our members commented about his 16 year-old fan belt that has never been off the car, so you be the judge on this one.
11. Disengage the clutch to prevent the clutch lining from sticking to the clutch plate. Keep the clutch pedal depressed with a piece of wood of the proper length wedged in place.
12. Make all engine openings air tight. Remove the air cleaners and seal the carburettor throats with plastic wrap and duct tape. Seal up the exhaust pipe and breather tube. Drain the remaining petrol from the float bowls and seal up the overflow tubes.
13. Spray carb linkage, choke and throttle cables

with a light oil. Some folks will even suggest to spray the entire engine bay and underside of the car with a light oil, using an "oil fogger", to be easily "degreased" in the spring.

14. Do not set the handbrake. If you have access to your car, it's not a bad idea to "exercise" the brakes periodically.
15. Store the car with the hood erect and the side curtains in place.
16. There seem to be two schools of thought in regard to car covers. Some say they trap moisture while others claim their covers "breathe". The best system I have seen (short of storing our cars in our living rooms) is the OMNI bag. I have not used one personally but I hear they are excellent and live up to all the claims they make about being the ultimate storage answer. I'm not sure if the bag can be used for outside storage, though.

Remember, as you're going over your car in preparation for storage, be observant and take notes as to the condition of things, i.e. rubber bushings, wiring, brake pipes and hoses. You may find a few preventative maintenance items you can take care of at this time, rather than find yourself stranded somewhere on your maiden voyage next spring. I'm embarrassed to admit that there have been years that I have done many of these items and years that I've done very few of them, but the important thing is a few hours spent with your car as I put it "under control rather than out of control" can save a break-down along the road somewhere in the future.

Safety Fast

Mark Zimmerman

The advert aside appeared in *Cars & Parts* magazine (published in Illinois) for September 1970. Now, long-time readers will know that this is the way I like to see them, from the "good old days" - "unmolested", one might say! This was the best of times!

Thanks to Jerry Ticknor for sending the mag' over.



The M.G. Y-Type Register

25th Anniversary

1978 - 2003



I think the preceding article applies equally well to Y-Types. It first appeared in *T Times* for Fall 1993.

### Sports Cars For Sale



RARE 1950 MGY Convertible, right hand drive, four seater, built-in hydraulic jack system, needs body work. \$850.00. Phone

Southfield, Michigan

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## REGISTER NEWS

Frank Russell, from Cobourg, Ontario, wrote to me in July to give me the now customary yearly update on the restoration of his car, Y/1336. Its body was at that time at the body-shop for paint-stripping and remedial metalwork to be done; it was then going to be painted in primer. Restoration is currently progressing more slowly than had been planned or hoped for. It *will* be very worthwhile in the end, Frank, believe so!

Another regular correspondent, Karl-Heinz Borchers of [REDACTED], Germany, has been on several rallies with his car, Y/T/EX(U) 2778, this summer. One of these runs celebrated Ford's Centenary (but non-Fords also took part), and on another he came across Y/T/EXR? 4317 which is currently owned by Mr. K.W.Schroeder of [REDACTED], Germany. This car was latterly with a Dr. Ptopsting, and has had a licence plate number change since (as a result of the change of ownership, or location?). For this coming winter, Karl-Heinz is planning a shock-absorber overhaul on '2778, and he may send us details of the work done, in due course. For 2004, he is hoping to organize a meeting of Y-Types to take place near Aachen, so that the Dutch and Belgian Y-Type owners can join in. If you are interested in this proposed rally for next year, Karl-Heinz can be contacted at: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Germany. Hope the weather was fine for you at Beaulieu, Karl-Heinz, and that you found plenty of Y-Type spares!

If readers refer back to the front page of Issue No.179 (last October) they will find a fair bit of history on Y/T/EXR 4118, which Dave Lawrence had come across at Silverstone. I have recently learnt that this car is now with Roger & Christine Morgan on the Isle of Wight.

In the "Cars for Sale" section elsewhere in this issue, readers will come across details of a rolling chassis that's currently stored in a lock-up garage near Stourbridge, Worcestershire. It has engine number "17460" and body number "125 MG 6194", but interested parties should note that there is no V5 registration document, and no number-plates are held by the current owner (of 25 years), Mr. David Tromans.

I have left the best till last...

Those of you who have a copy of *Let There Be Ys* may like to turn to p.p. 230 to 232, where Dave Lawrence describes the Nuffield Metal Products plates and the various numbers and codes which appear on them. This has been a long-running mystery for both of us, and over the years I have contacted the Morris Register twice (both times, to no avail) in an attempt to solve the puzzle. The Y-Type, of course, shares the basic (central) body pressings (i.e., basic body shape) with both the Morris Eight Series E and Wolseley Eight. It was always my belief that these cars should also have Nuffield Metal Products identity plates attached to their bodies, but I had never been able to obtain any more data (or co-operation, it must be said) in order to substantiate my ideas. Recently, I hit upon contacting the Wolseley Register in a last desperate attempt: to see if the Wolseley Eight cars also had these plates. They don't! With the assistance of Mr. David E.Allen, a Life Vice-President of the Wolseley Register, I believe, though, that I have at last been able to unravel at least part of the mystery. Read on...

The Wolseley Eight, the Morris Eight Series E and the Morris Minor Series MM (that is, the very first version of the Minor) do not have N.M.P. plates fitted. The obvious deduction from this is that their bodies were not produced at the N.M.P. plant in Birmingham. We know that bodies for the Morris Ten cars were produced at Pressed Steel (across the road from the Cowley factory). It is now my theory, therefore, that bodies for the Eight Series E, Wolseley Eight and Minor Series MM were made by Pressed Steel. But where does this leave the Y-Type M.G.? Well, on p.p. 228 & 231 of *Let There Be Ys* Dave Lawrence discusses the very early Y-Types, which have the anomalous Body Type "B280" and do not have Nuffield Metal Products plates fitted. These early cars (he suggests, those prior to Y/0520) also differ somewhat in some of their body pressings etc. to all other later "Y" Saloons. So, I would now suggest that these early Y-Type bodies were made at the Pressed Steel factory, and that when the Minor Series MM unitary construction body was introduced at Pressed Steel, space was made for it by shipping off the "Y-Type" body jigs and tooling to N.M.P. at Birmingham. (Both the Eight Series E and Wolseley Eight were discontinued in 1948, with the four-door Morris Eight Series E with the sliding sunroof being taken out of production somewhat earlier, at the end of 1947.) The lower photo on p. 5 of the last issue of *TCY* was taken, I would therefore suggest, at Pressed Steel or, better yet, at the Cowley plant itself (after all, Pressed Steel would not have stacks of chassis present in their factory, would they?). Of course, we're still no nearer knowing what the various "variable codes" (e.g., "Z 8693", "SR.Z 11165") meant!

Of more relevance to a column called *Register News*, perhaps, is the fact that David Allen told me that he has in his possession a body number plate (from a "Y") inscribed "Body Type: B281 - Body No.: MG 3640/3621". Our Register reveals that this was once fitted to Y/4792, a 1950 car, with engine no. XPAG/B55130 and number-plate "HSC999". When we first learnt of this car it was with a Mr. P.Rhys-Harris of [REDACTED] it later moved to Kent with a Mr. Atkinson. Its original engine had been SC/14608 and it was a black car with a red interior. Mr. Allen, who now owns the body number plate, lives in Kent. So, what happened to Y/4792? Go on, have a guess!!

The other great long-running mystery of the Y-Type Register concerns chassis production, and those odd little "badges", as Dave Lawrence refers to them (p.p. 24 & 25 of *LTBYs*), on the right-hand chassis frames (together with a completely separate sequence of "chassis numbers" to be found there also). In last October's *Register News* I mentioned chassis production by John Thompson Motor Pressings of Wolverhampton and, following this up, I have been fortunate to be able to contact their company historian. He has been able to confirm to me that John Thompson did indeed produce the chassis for Y-Types, and for many more British cars besides. They did not, however, number them, or stamp them in any way with any kind of identification before shipping them off to Abingdon. That would therefore suggest that the right-hand numbers were allocated (stamped) by Abingdon upon receipt, and that the left-hand numbers were allocated (stamped) upon commencement of a car down the production lines. I have been able to acquire copies of some interesting documentation from John Thompson's company historian and I will be reproducing this material in the next few issues of *TCY*. Whilst this cannot be considered on a par with any of our other famous ground-breaking and long-running series of

the past, it may serve to fill up two or three issues, and shed some light on a hitherto ignored aspect of British motor manufacture.

I have written elsewhere (that is, in another publication) of the dismay I felt when I learnt earlier this year that B.M.I.H.T. at Gaydon were planning to auction off 80 of their cars (museum exhibits or items from store). The auction duly took place on 29th June. I had not thought this unfortunate business of any relevance to Y-Types until I learnt from a quite unexpected source that an M.G. YB had been one of the cars auctioned off. This should be YB/0481, "UMG665". This car was owned by a chap named Tim Pennicott in the 1970s; he was instrumental in saving several "Y"s at a time when hardly anyone was interested in them at all. I believe he sold the car to what was then British Leyland's museum at Syon Park, London. That collection, of course, later moved to Gaydon, in Warwickshire, but meanwhile YB/0481 had appeared on T.V., in one of the *Miss Marple* adventures. The car was in Gaydon's "reserve collection", I believe, and was never on show in the museum itself. In 2000, the museum contacted me to tell me that they were about to start restoring the car; they asked me where they could obtain parts for it. This was around the time when Gaydon had started including the phrase "Part of B.M.W. Mobile Tradition" on all their correspondence and publicity information. As did many others, I found this state of affairs most offensive and, as our correspondence occurred just after the Phoenix consortium had taken over what was to become M.G.-Rover, I asked Gaydon to clarify the current position (i.e., was the museum still B.M.W.-owned). I declined to help them until I knew more, and they never replied - I would not have assisted them had they continued as a part of B.M.W. A few months later, of course, Ford acquired Land Rover and the Gaydon site and, after a respectful period of years, have now set about making space so as to house some of their own historic vehicles. And hence, the auction. BUT, the good news turns out to be that the YB has been bought by M.G.-Rover for inclusion in their own nascent museum located at the Longbridge factory! Now that is something I would support - providing the company remains British-owned, that is!

### Cars for Sale

"1952 M.G. YB Saloon, 'UMG625'. We have owned the above car for 34 years; it is in good condition but could benefit from some love and attention. We use it weekly but have decided the time has come to part with it. We are looking for offers based on £6,000. Contact: Colin & Sheila Taylor, [REDACTED] Monmouthshire, [REDACTED]. Tel: [REDACTED]."

"M.G. Y-Type rolling chassis, complete with engine ('17460'), gearbox, back axle, bulkhead, radiator & shell, front wings, bonnet, instruments and jacking system. No V5 registration document held. Body number, '125 MG 6194'. The chassis is in very good condition; still in its original black paint, with some surface rust only. Contact: Mr. David Tromans, [REDACTED] Worcestershire, [REDACTED] Tel: [REDACTED] (evenings & weekends)."

"M.G. YT: 1949 rare supercharged 4-pass convertible, maroon, tan top. Recent 100-point professional restoration, invitee to Pebble Beach. Tel: [REDACTED] (Indiana, U.S.A.)."



This is YB/0610, in Old English White. This 1952 YB was one of the first Y-Types to be properly restored. It is today in Ohio, U.S.A., and is currently Autumn Red in colour.

*photo scanned & reproduced by Gary Hills.*

