

THE CLASSIC 'Y'

Volume 7. No.65.

The Magazine of the M.G. 'Y' Type Register.

October 1984.

EDITORIAL:

In the June issue I advertised the fact that sun visors made to the original pattern were available at £3.50 a pair (incl. U.K. postage). Following extensive and painstaking trials (!) we are now able to offer sun visors covered in the original-type beige Union heading cloth at £5.50 a pair (incl. U.K. postage). And to go with them, why not a new pair of chrome brackets? I hear that these can be obtained from Chris Coleman Spares on [REDACTED] (evenings only).

In the last magazine I said that we would soon have leather key fobs available. Well, the key rings are now available but they're plastic, not leather! I think a little self-deception crept into the August editorial. The key rings we have available are in see-through plastic with the Register's emblem encased within printed on white card. The card is removable if the plastic insert is levered out gently and this enables you to write your name and address or what you wish on the blank reverse side of the card. These key rings are £0.55 each (incl. U.K. postage).

Many of you will have no doubt heard of the International Garden Festival which has been held here in Liverpool this summer (and a wonderful show it was, too!) Well, on 1st September two hundred or so assorted cars, ranging from veteran to 1960s attended a rally in the Garden Festival Arena. Three 'Y' Types were present and I was delighted to learn later that one of them won the 'Best Car of Show' prize (no, I wasn't a judge!) The car in question is a beautifully restored maroon 1950 YA;LTJ 900 (number 731 on our Register). The win was made all the sweeter in that there were a number of 'T' Types in the line-up (plus a superb Triumph Roadster).

So, there were no export YBs, hey? That was the generally held belief until a month or so ago. Malcolm Wood wrote to me from Gladesville, Sydney, Australia to say that some years ago he swapped his guitar for a YB which had been found under a farm house on the northern coast of New South Wales. The YB's engine number is XPAG/SC/X18132 and it is thought to have been one of three YBs especially imported into Australia by the directors of distributors P & R Williams for their wives! The YB is now making a slow but steady recovery in Malcolm's hands - nice swap, that!

Charlotte Luer is doing a great job running the Eastern U.S. Chapter. She has already published two issues of her local news supplements to our own 'TCY'. Some first class articles and tips are being sent in by U.S. owners and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their loyalty in joining our new, re-vamped U.S. Chapter after our first attempt in 1981 was somewhat still-born. Welcome back, Tom Bowman, Mike & Jennifer Ash, Tom Baumgardner, J. Richard Boudrais and Kirtley Winn and 'welcome' to new owners, George Banister, Mike Lewis, Daniel Beidler, Vince Groover and Ed Seagrave.

2nd October 1984.

REGISTER NEWS:

Recent Discoveries:

<u>Chassis No.</u>	<u>Year.</u>	<u>Type.</u>	<u>Engine No.</u>	<u>Reg'n No.</u>	<u>Colour.</u>	<u>Owner's Name.</u>
Y 0436	1947.	YA.	XPAG/SC/10257	?	Green.	E.Seagrave.
Y 6545	1951.	YA.	XPAG/SC/16372	OVK 912	Green.	D.Brown.
YB 1241	1953.	YB.	XPAG/SC/X18132	?	?	M.K.Wood.

Total cars on the Register as at 23rd September 1984: 1,029.

Made up as follows: YA: 540 YB: 238 YT: 175 YRC: 3 Composites/Specials: 10.

Unknown (mainly saloons): 63.

New Owners:

682. D.C.Beidler, [REDACTED], Pennsylvania, [REDACTED], U.S.A.
684. G.T.Banister, [REDACTED], Florida, [REDACTED], U.S.A.
685. G.von Hoegen, [REDACTED], W.Germany.
686. M.K.Wood, [REDACTED], N.S.W., Australia.
687. D.A.Spencer, [REDACTED].

Total number of known current owners as at 23rd September 1984: 626.

Address Changes:

157. T.T.Baumgardner, [REDACTED], Ohio, [REDACTED], U.S.A.
486. S.Warren, [REDACTED], New Zealand.

CARS FOR SALE:

97. 1949 YT. Chassis no: Y/T/EXR 2617. Engine no: XPAG/TR/12558. Cream with red interior. First registered 20th April 1949 and featured in the 'Autocar' articles, 'Pleasant Places In Wales' (30/6/50) and 'Exile In Lakeland' (1/7/49). Registered 'KLU 387'. Placed first in Concours at Spy Park in 1982. 'Car Of The Day' at Beaulieu 8/82. Took part in First Regency Run (London - Brighton) 20/5/84. 'Serious enquiries only, please' to Mr. John Finch, [REDACTED] Herts.
Tel: [REDACTED].

281. 'YB Rolling chassis complete with engine. Partly constructed ash frame. Offers around £200. Tel: Tamworth [REDACTED].

168. 1950 YT. Chassis no: Y/T/EXR 4827. Engine no: XPAG/TD/9184. Black with red interior. Registered 'EKS 231'. Complete, for restoration. Contact: Nigel Hancock, [REDACTED], Merseyside, [REDACTED].

SPARES FOR SALE:

YA radiator shell £18; YA radiator core £12.50; two YA front seats £9.50 each. Write to: [REDACTED], Sussex. Tel: [REDACTED].

YA hubs, brake back plates, brake cylinders, brake drums, manifold, carburettor, boot lid hinges, front wings, front valance, windscreen etc etc. Contact: Mr. Rory McManus, [REDACTED], Lancs, [REDACTED]. Tel: [REDACTED].

IMPORTANT LATE NEWS ! : 'Practical Classics' magazine for December (due out on Thursday 8th November) should feature a major article on the 'Y' Type !

MEMBERS' TIPS

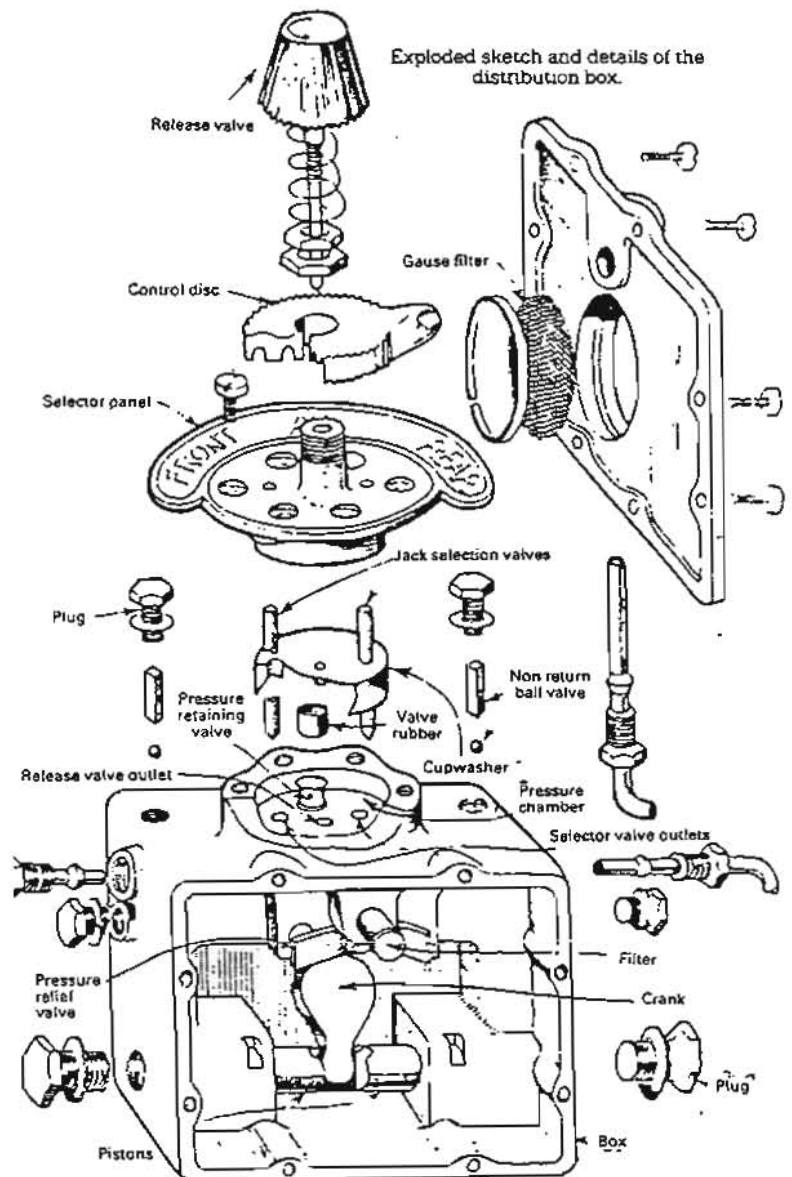
Bill Stokes: Can anyone help me find a set of the rubber seals used in the pumps of the Jackall jacking system of the 'Y' Type? The rubbers are used to seal off the front and rear valves and the return valve. The pump itself works very well after I modified the piston with rubber washers as shown in the sketch at the foot of the page. It may help others as most pumps have worn bores.

The countersunk head of the screw bells the end of the rubber out to make a lip to form an oil seal - rubber with canvas inlay is the best.

The fluid to use in the 'Y's Jackall system is electrical transformer oil - it is vegetable based and will not harm any rubber in the system. Anyone in the trade should be able to get it free.

Should anyone be able to help me obtain the seals or, alternatively, any complete pumps, please write to me at: 11 David Street, Clifton Gardens, Sydney, N.S.W., 2088, Australia.

The drawing aside is reprinted from 'Practical Motorist & Motor Cyclist'.



new plunger approximately
3/8" shorter - mild steel is
all right.

rubber or neoprene washer 3/16"
thick, held on with 4BA countersunk
screw

David Ransome: Further to Mel Fry's item in the previous issue concerning sun-roof body number plates, this is confirmed and may be accounted for by the assumption that sun-roofs came ready trimmed from a Morris factory before they were fitted to the cars at Abingdon.

Those of you who have been with us for a long time will remember that I was in the habit of serialising the various stages in the progress of my 1953 YB, 'Enterprise', towards full restoration. The articles were based on the notes I had made at the time the actual work was completed. In this way I hoped to give the less mechanically minded of us some warning as to the likely pitfalls to be encountered.

The 'Enterprise' Restoration serial, however, seems to have fallen a little by the wayside. Indeed the last episode appeared in the October 1982 magazine (issue no.53) and its non-appearance since owes much to the fact that we have had a surfeit of much more worthy contributions from sources other than your editor. With the stock of these articles etc (other than the 'Autocar' reprints) falling a little low, I feel the time is now ripe to put pen to paper in order to bring you up to date on how the 'old girl' has been fairing. So, here it is, for better or worse, episode 16 of 'The "Enterprise" Restoration'.

It is Spring 1981. YB 1524, alias 'Enterprise' is fairly complete, with the body painted and the right-side wings and running board and all four doors painted and fitted. Still to go are the nearside panels, bonnet and sunroof. I have related previously how it had been decided at an early stage to hand-paint the car. The materials employed and justifications for this approach are described in an earlier episode (see below for details of how to obtain copies of episodes 1 - 15, if desired). The doors and off-side panels had been painstakingly rubbed down to bare metal using copious amounts of paint stripper and elbow grease (!) plus man's sheets of 'wet & dry'. By the time I was ready to prepare the remaining panels for painting I had fortunately met someone who knew the whereabouts of a local organisation which undertook dry grit blasting. Thus, the nearside front and rear wings were sent away to be processed in this way. I was extremely pleased with the result for, what I received back, were two wings completely cleaned of all paint and any rust there might have been. The surface was bare metal, exhibiting a somewhat coarse surface which only needed smoothing off by the application of fine 'wet & dry'. It is important to say at this stage I think that, firstly, the dry grit blasting process used should employ a suction grit supply (see article in issue no.63) and, secondly, once down to bare metal, the panels should be stored in a scrupulously dry area (preferably in one's house) otherwise surface rust will form very quickly.

to be continued.....

A complete set of copies of episodes 1 to 15 of "The 'Enterprise' Restoration" can be obtained from J.G.Lawson, [REDACTED] at price £4 including U.K. postage.

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Membership Secretary/Registrar/Editor:

J.G.Lawson, [REDACTED] Merseyside, England.

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Spares Secretary:

A.Brier, [REDACTED], W.Yorks [REDACTED] England.

United States Chapter:

Tory Skopecek & David Miller, [REDACTED], California, [REDACTED]

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Eastern United States Chapter: Mrs Charlotte Luer, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] New Jersey [REDACTED].



A typically French mountain panorama on the descent from the Col de la Croix Haute in the Dauphin Alps. The village of le Percy-Monestier basks in the sun, with a back-cloth of distant peaks, their snow-filled crevices gleaming through the afternoon haze.

FRANCE ON A SHOE-STRING

MEMORIES OF 2,000 MILES THROUGH THE LAND OF HOSPITALITY

by MICHAEL
BROWN



Study in haphazard architectural beauty at Marvejols, on the Route d'Auvergne. This is a fine example of the ancient French town that is so attractive in its air of gentle decay. As an inducement to tourists, the uneven roofs make a piquant contrast with the Dome of Discovery.

IT was, admittedly, a substantial shoe-string—£35 per head (four persons) for sixteen days, exclusive of cross-Channel charges. As it happened, we could have done it on £30 per head, but the annual holiday is no time for cheeseparing. "It's shockingly expensive," called the occupants of a car at Dover as they passed us coming off the ferry on which we were to cross. It isn't.

Earlier in the year I had decided to tour France economically. Frenchmen do it, and the French are a frugal race; I could not believe that the ordinary Frenchman would be prepared to spend on his holiday a sum that was outrageous by the standards he set for the rest of the year. We would therefore "go French" (one pays for the privilege of going international), armed with *Les Auberges de France* and determined not to speak English unless we had to, for the summer holiday abroad is excellent linguistic education. Armed, also, with the list of hotels in the French *logis* scheme (fixed prices, fixed standards), and a pile of routes supplied by M. Maurice Vignon, of the French tourist office in London, who had assured us that by following any of them we should, as desired, "see the real France."

M. Vignon gets top marks for his Route d'Auvergne, which is outlined on the map. By general consent it was enjoyed much more than the celebrated tourist route we

followed back from the Mediterranean. The mountains, particularly, were a delight. It is true that the cols lack height by comparison with the famous ones, and the peaks also. But the gradients are sometimes steeper and the bends less well engineered, with the result that fast climbing is good, exciting fun. The slopes themselves, plenty steep enough for grandeur, were mostly clothed by pines through which the streams far below glint like fish in the sunlight, and the crowning glory was the yellow broom, an offset for pine green if you like, which was massed everywhere that it could get a hold. Nothing in the sunbaked Alpine slopes gave rise to such gasps of pleasure as this. A laurel wreath might also be awarded to Mont Dore, the mountain resort west of Clermont Ferrand. Reached by a climb of spacious glory, this resort remains much more French than international.

The Club des Sans-club handbook never let us down, and hotel memories are most vivid. They varied from the celebrated (in French eyes, if not internationally) to the unknown except to *les routiers*, but they were all cheap and admirable. In the first category might be placed the Ecu de France at Lâon and the roadside Auberge de la Reinette near Brignolles, also the Château Vert at Grau d'Agde, of which more later. In the second category no better example could be quoted than Chez Camillou, somewhere high up in the Auvergues near Aumont. Chez Camillou is a family-run halt for *les routiers*. It has a dining room, a bar and two bedrooms for guests; the lavatory is "down the garden." The garage is the vast cellar under the house, into which your car must nuzzle amongst wine casks and farming impedimenta; that is, provided you have decided to risk the steep passage down from the road to the entrance. Keep a weather eye on the rock outcrops!

We arrived at Chez Camillou at 6 p.m. on a Monday, and drank Cinzanos on the roadside bench while Madame cooked a dinner; her daughter had cycled down to Aumont for the veal. It was an enormous, beautifully cooked meal, and afterwards we chatted to the family, made a fuss of Bichette the dog, and then went to bed in perfect linen and comfort. All night the *rossignols* sang; they had come out, said Madame, to greet the sun, which was shining for the first time in many weeks.

No Comment

How charming the French are! During the whole of the tour we heard not a surly comment, nor were we the object of a single discourtesy. I would award high marks in this respect to the waitress at the Château Vert at Grau d'Agde, whose jolly comments at first proved very difficult of understanding. Her pronunciation of *maintenant* gave us the clue, for it was roughly as an Englishman might pronounce it who knew no French; with that as a basis linguistic relations were established, and we were looked after incomparably during a four-day stay *en pension*. The Château Vert is a lovely place. It has a great courtyard at the rear in which pines are planted, and palms. There are flowers everywhere. There are also a stage, and two concrete courts for dancing. The roofed and low-arched hotel portion, facing this scene, contains the bar and dining tables, and other tables stand under the trees. Dining with the staff and holidaymakers was great fun, one of the pleasantest occasions of a pleasant stay; we sampled dishes that we should not have dreamed of ordering *à la carte*, and profited thereby. And on two nights we enjoyed dancing to a quintet of first-class ability, with a violinist who played tangos as if her soul responded specially to that bewitching rhythm. The lovely south! Our waitress, asking us where we had been, said that she knew Dunkirk—tragically, for her husband was killed there. It was cold—she shuddered expressively—and she was glad to come back to the Mediterranean.

Grau d'Agde is a fishing village with a *plage*. We were the only English there during our stay, and gained a little celebrity as a result. In the shops they asked us to tell our countrymen that the *plage* was an excellent one, and that Grau d'Agde welcomed *les étrangers*. That is all truth, and perhaps rather less than more. I shall return to Grau d'Agde.

One's memories are mostly of people, and what they said,

Route followed by the author. From Issoudun to Nîmes it coincides with the recommended Route d'Auvergne. Le Grau d'Agde is on the coast due south of Agde.



Grau d'Agde under the Mediterranean sun. Lateen-rigged fishing boats lie alongside; the crew's clothing gets an airing, and the long nets (sometimes one hundred yards) are spread to dry over the bollards and along the road.



Left: View from a hotel window: The tremendous rock which dominates Castellane and is crowned by a church. From the Col de Lèques, however, the rock becomes dwarfed into a black anthill, only incidental to the general scene.

FRANCE ON A SHOE-STRING continued

Last remnants of winter snow melt on the summits of the hills near Mont Dore. The date was July, the heights are about 4,000 ft.



which is a tribute to the French nation, for the people must compete with a countryside of rare beauty. When we arrived in Pézenas the boys in the place were playing what was obviously a local game. Our question confirmed this, and we were invited into the parlour to learn more about it. Called *le tambourin*, it is played by striking a ball with "tambourines" made of goatskin stretched tightly over a wooden circle. The protagonist's bat has a handle, the others hold their bats by the rim. The ball is struck great distances with a loud and satisfying crack, at least to youngsters. We preferred the notes that came from the trees at dusk like the clear tone of silver handbells. By this time we were drinking black coffee after dinner, and Madame, who noted our interest, was pleased to explain. They came from *les chouettes*, the owls, obviously a more melodious variety than that which screeches from my neighbour's oak trees. Molière lived in Pézenas for many years, and it is an ancient, rather grubby town, but with a fine garden containing his statue.

There was, too, the old boatman who took us across the canal at Grau d'Agde. He thought we were Americans (we were variously thought to be Swiss, Belgian, German and American, but never English, which we found mightily amusing) and, upon learning that we were British, rested on his oars and told us about the Great War. He had been in the French merchant marine, was sunk at the Dardanelles, picked up by a Turkish battleship and imprisoned with the Scots. But yes, he knew the Scots well. To prove it, he stood up in the small boat, danced a little hornpipe, the while imitating a fife rendering of "It's a long way to Tipperary." When we had difficulty in understanding him he would lapse into his few words of German, of which we knew nothing. Agreeably crazy, this sort of thing; he was our firm friend for three days.

Liveliest encounter was breakfast near Brignolles with two French medical students, a Danish hiker and a Sicilian *meccanico*. The Sicilian was delivering a lorry from Bologna to heaven knows where, and had picked up the others. They were drinking a bottle of *Château Neuf du Pape*, and under its influence language difficulties receded. The Dane spoke a little English, the Sicilian a travesty of the same. He also had his own particular variety of French. The French students spoke a little English, too, rather less than we spoke of French. But we got along. The Dane,

Midday on the Côte d'Azur, looking towards Cap d'Antibes. Motorists lunch in the shade of the pines, and the Fiat owner has pulled the cabriolet roof over in order to avoid a very hot seat!



armed with only Danish currency and travellers' cheques, had nearly starved for three days owing to his inability to make himself understood and to the French habit of closing the banks with a certain haphazardness.

The Sicilian loved the English, and Manchester and Liverpool, but hated the climate. "I am," he declaimed, "one of the sun." His final gesture proved it. He plucked a great blossom from a Laurier rose that grew in the hotel forecourt, bowed and presented it to the English *mesdames* as the car left. "Long live England," he then proclaimed. "Long live Sicily," we replied, tacking on as an afterthought, in view of his profession, Alberto Ascari and Luigi Villoretti. He drew himself up with great dignity: "And . . .," he paused dramatically, "Nino Farina." But certainly. The M.G. swept away to an international cheer.

I had almost forgotten the M.G. It did its job excellently, showing a great liking for *supercarburant*, to which it was treated as an honoured guest of the company. On "super" it never pinked; nor did it run-on. On British Pool it does both. Once we nearly ran out of petrol and filled up with ordinary French petrol, when some pinking and running-on occurred. With this direct comparison in mind, I would put both petrols ahead of British Pool, *supercarburant* being well ahead and well worth the extra money in a high-performance car. Ordinary petrol may be about the same quality as Pool, for I must have had some super in the tank when we took on the single load of *carburant auto*.

We held the car down to 55 m.p.h. cruising speed over the long, straight roads of France. There is a great temptation for the British motorist to put his foot hard down and revel in such roads, but it is not wise. I believe in nursing my car on such trips, although not in some things. It must

get round bends on mountains at such speeds as will keep the engine revving, even if this means hauling round with protest from the tyres. It must take French oil, too, for I do not subscribe to the notion that French oils are no diet for an M.G. If they are, the oil companies should do something about it—they are international. And it must take load and luggage without protest (as it did). I have no room for the owner who fusses about his back springs if someone proposes to include an electric iron. But I am fully prepared to drive so that the risk of engine breakdown is at a minimum, owing to the difficulties of and time spent in replacements. The M.G. had only one failure—of a petrol gauge tank unit, when I hit a subsidence at a higher speed than I would have liked. A sharp eye is necessary on minor French roads, but it should not be thought that they are unsuitable; we used RN roads, GC roads and D roads, without complaint. Some of the lesser roads were as charming as English country lanes, their banks being massed with viper's bugloss, queen of wild flowers.

Food and drink? Touchy subjects, I recall. We drank the *vin du pays* often, occasionally the vintage bottle, and once, on special recommendation, the *vin originaire* of the champagne country. We never had a bad meal, not even an indifferent one. In the essentials of life the French have a great understanding.

Enough, the nostalgia for the red roofs of Provence becomes overwhelming. Go French; allow yourselves about 2,000 francs a head a day for expenses, which will include petrol for the run (ours was of 2,000 miles), and you will have a superb holiday. Pay the Channel charges in advance and try to forget them; they are the only unjustifiably expensive item in a French holiday this year.

Mountain view from the Col de Lèques, which climbs up from Castellane to a height of nearly 4,000ft. It lies on Route Nationale 85 and is the main road to Digne.

