

## THE CLASSIC 'Y'

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

Volume 9. No.75.

June 1986.

### EDITORIAL

I took 'Enterprise' for an M.O.T. a few weeks ago. Despite spending the last few months trying to get the brake light switch to work again, she failed; this time because, firstly, in the opinion of the tester, there was too much play in the steering column upper felt bush and, secondly, because apparently the near-side rear brake was binding. To illustrate what a 'hit and miss' affair the M.O.T. test can sometimes be, particularly in relation to our type of car, I would make the following comments in the hope that they might provide some food for thought for some of my readers.

To begin with the tester was a little concerned that a good quantity of oil was dripping down onto his expensive new ramps from the split-pin filled hole in the bell-housing which is designed to take away any oil which leaks through from the engine when the oil seal begins to deteriorate (or even, according to an article in this issue, when the oil seal is new!) Fair enough, though not part of the test, it seems that the oil seal may have deteriorated during the winter. Then on asking me to operate the trafficators he had trouble finding them. He was looking at the wings! I don't think he had seen semaphore arms before!

I'll agree with him that there was a lot of play in the steering column and that it would not tend to fill anyone new to the car with confidence. However, on returning home I read my M.O.T. Tester's Manual and apparently, according to page 12, "for rack and pinion mechanisms, free play in excess of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " should be considered excessive". There certainly wasn't free play in excess of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " at my steering wheel.

Next, as regards the binding brakes, on later inspection this was impossible to detect when spinning the wheel by hand. I suspect that the modern sensitive equipment now used by all M.O.T. testing stations can detect something which, in the past, would not have been noticed. I backed the adjuster off one notch on that wheel. Will this have cured the problem, I wonder, and when will I have the courage to take the car for another test and risk losing £10 + V.A.T. if it is failed again?

I make the above comments not because I have any quarrel with the person who tested my car. I do not. He called it as he saw it and I have the satisfaction of knowing that the test was very thorough and that, apart from the items mentioned above, 'Enterprise' is in good roadworthy condition. Of course, I could have appealed against the decision but then I would have had to pay another fee and had another test carried out anyway. I could have gone home, made the necessary repairs and taken the car back for a re-test (thus, perhaps saving myself any more expense) but, as I can't really afford the Road Tax anyway, why bother? Oh well !!!!

## Register Number 637

Chassis Number Y6488  
Engine Number SC/16294  
Licence Plate UMG314  
Body Number 5160/5107  
Sub-Type YA  
Year of Manuf' 51  
Owner's Name Ribber Castle Museum  
Owner Number 804  
Car Location Derbyshire ENG  
Exterior Colour n/k  
Interior Colour -

## Register Number 154

Chassis Number YB1041  
Engine Number SC2/17932  
Licence Plate KZ8088  
Body Number 6676/858  
Sub-Type YB  
Year of Manuf' 53  
Owner's Name Harris MJP  
Owner Number 810  
Car Location Co. Antrim NI  
Exterior Colour Green  
Interior Colour B

## CARS FOR SALE:

- 820 1950 YA. 'GCO84' "M.O.T. Mechanically perfect, interesting registration. £3,000 o.n.o. Tel: [REDACTED] (day), [REDACTED] (evenings)".
- 168 Y/T/EXR 4827. 1950 YT. 'EKS231' "Complete. Body very rough. Chassis apparently reasonable. Complete restoration required. Spare chassis frame, suspensions, wheels, two petrol tanks, chrome radiator surround, bonnet, front valance, and front inner wings. Unused and perfect hood and side curtains. N.T.G. rear repair panel and fibreglass spare wheel compartment cover. Best offer over £2,000. Contact: Nigel Hancock, [REDACTED], Merseyside [REDACTED]. Tel: [REDACTED]."
- 449 "M.G. 'Y' Type. Beautifully restored chassis, sandblasted, zinc metal sprayed, three coats stove enamel, stainless steel fittings etc. New marine ply floorboards, varnished, with stainless steel fittings. Radiator stove enamelled; excellent condition. Shock absorbers reconditioned. Steering column and steering rack reconditioned and stove enamelled. Nearside front wing excellent, in primer. Front nose piece excellent, in primer. Springs reconditioned and painted. New exhaust system. Bumper bar blades rechromed. New headlights. Numerous other parts including dash panel with instruments, doors, bonnet, radiator grille, jacking system, front seat, rear seat. Ideal basis for rebuild. Tel: Tony Hebdon on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (evenings and weekends)."

## PARTS FOR SALE:

"Near mint copy of the 1½ Litre M.G. YB Workshop Manual. Tel: Mr.R.Gunning on [REDACTED]".

YB Workshop Manual and Parts List (both original and in good condition).

Offers, please to: Mr.H.Taylor [REDACTED].

YA/TC 'cut-out'; wheel cylinder & master cylinder rubbers (new); trafficators (new); spotlamps (v.good); TC/YA oil filter (new); 16" tyres (new); radiator shell and radiator (v.good); front valance (v.good); bonnet (v.good); wheels (v.good); differentials (v.good); halfshafts (v.good); headlamps (with Lucas badge) (new); front exhaust bend; manifold; air intake (new, with M.G. price still on); seat back ashtray (v.good); bumpers (YB); jacks; jack pumps; steering rack; steering column; horn centre; 'D' lamps; 'Y' sales leaflet (mint); YT sales leaflet (mint); 'Y' owners' handbooks (x2) (mint); windscreen and other glass; plus lots of other parts. Contact: Mr.P.F.West, [REDACTED] Essex [REDACTED].

"Y Type 1.25 inch S.U. single carb (H2); new. Offers to: David Pallant [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Norfolk [REDACTED]".

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## MEMBERS' COLUMN

Trevor Austin: At the foot of page 34 of my 'YA' Owners' Handbook there appears the following sentence: "A spare quart can of N.O.L. Engine Oil is included in the car's equipment". As this sentence does not appear in all owners' handbooks (it does not appear in my January 1951 edition - ed.) can anyone tell me when the inclusion of this can of oil as part of the original equipment of the car ceased and, where the can was supplied, where it was stowed on the car? I should like to acquire one of these original quart cans and if anyone knows where I can find one I would be pleased to hear from them.

Secondly, I should like to have the clock in my car repaired. Does anyone know of an organisation which undertakes such work?

Lastly, and again referring to the Owners' Handbook, on page 16 the pedal rubbers are shown as having 'M.G.' mouldings. Is this just a case of 'artistic licence' or were cars supplied originally with such pedal rubbers? Again, if possible, I should like to acquire a set of these.

Correspondence on any of the above points, please, to: [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Surrey [REDACTED].

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STOP PRESS !!! (Parts For Sale):

Crankshaft and set of conrods (original and never used). Contact: Mr.J.Baxter, Lark Lane Motor Museum, [REDACTED] Tel: [REDACTED].

THE 'ENTERPRISE' RESTORATION  
The Last Episode - at last !

by John Lawson.

1983 seemed to pass with little progress. In June of that year my father, who readers will be aware, had, since the beginning in December 1977, contributed significantly to the progress of the restoration with endless encouragement, wise words and practical assistance in all weathers, passed away. The 'Enterprise' restoration seemed to lose its way. The problem with the brakes narrated in the last episode seemed insoluble and quite beyond me. I couldn't seem to make that final effort to get the car finished and M.O.T.'d.

If 1983 had been one of our worst years, then 1984 was to be one of our best.

In May I showed 'Enterprise' to a new friend, someone who'd helped me through the bad times of the previous year. Her genuine delight at seeing the car made me vow that somehow I would make that final effort. Over the next six months I sorted out the headlamp wiring short, rewiring part of the loom, and tried to solve the problem of the brakes myself. Then, when I'd done all I could, I turned to our Spares Secretary, Tony Brier. I was sure he'd have so much work in hand that I would have to wait sometime before he could carry out the work necessary on 'Enterprise'. And how was I to get 'Enterprise' across the Pennines to Yorkshire? I'll always be immeasurably thankful to Tony for what he did. He kindly arranged to do the work right away and was even able to arrange very efficient transportation for my YB to his workshop. Transportation was undertaken by Nicholas A. Dawson of Unit 3, Underbank Mills, Dunford Road, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire (Tel: 0484-687299 or 662018) who was friendly and punctual. It was arranged that Tony would do any work necessary to have the car M.O.T.'d and secretly I felt that, in the event, there might be a few failure areas besides the brakes (the front suspension, for instance, had not been rebuilt). Imagine my surprise and delight, therefore, after eight years of work when, only a few days later, I received in the post from Tony an M.O.T. certificate for 'Enterprise' - at last!

Tony had carried out the following work for me:

- (i) Copper brake pipes fitted throughout (I had purchased a set some years previously).
- (ii) New master cylinder fitted.
- (iii) New near-side handbrake cable fitted (the previous one had eventually seized completely).

In addition, on carrying out this work, he noticed and remedied a few ham-fisted errors of mine:

- (a) A rear brake pull-off spring had not been located properly.
- (b) The near-side front stub axle nut had had its thread stripped when I had tried to remove the left-hand threaded nut, right-handed !!
- (c) front brake hose copper washer had been incorrectly fitted.



(d) A near-side rear brake shoe was bent (how ?)

(e) The front wheel brake cylinders were fitted upside down (the whys and wherefores of this subject are explained in "Members Tips" Issue No.71 and are recommended reading for YB owners)

For several days I could hardly believe that at last the final step had been achieved . Eight long years of sometimes seemingly impossible tasks in all kinds of atrocious weather, every weekend. And now I could at last drive 'Enterprise' on the road!

Well, this is nearly the end of our saga; one which has lasted since episode one appeared as 'Individual Car Histories No.1 - YB1524' in Issue No.2 of 'The Classic Y' in March 1978. It has spanned twenty-one episodes and, like the restoration itself, seemed never-ending. In a further article I will go on to relate initial driving impressions and maintenance work necessary during the first year on the road since restoration - 1985. A car such as my YB however is never 'finished' as such. Maintenance work and improvements continue. In 1985, though, I was going to enjoy driving her. My father, I know, would be very proud.

This is nearly the end of the saga but I feel that I must make mention of one last aspect of the rebuild before closing. On 27th October 1980 I ordered from N.T.G. Motor Services Ltd of Ipswich a new chrome headlamp bar (catalogue no. C808). It was received on 19th March 1981 and remained in its wrapping until 12th July 1981 when it was installed on the car. Between that time and late 1982 'Enterprise' was never left outside the garage in the rain or washed (the car was not externally complete until 5th September 1982). The garage 'Enterprise' is kept in is a dry one. During 1983, however, after being washed down a couple of times chrome began to flake off the near-side of the headlamp bar. The exposed metal appeared to be steel, not a brass coating; the chroming process would seem to have been carried out directly onto steel! By late 1983 there was very little chrome left on the near-side of the headlamp bar. Between January and October 1985 the exposed part of the headlamp bar on the off-side of the car also lost all its 'chrome', the flakes peeling off looking for all the world like tin foil! The original 32 year old chromed parts of the car; headlamps, windscreen surround, spotlamps and grille are in fairly good condition. The 'new' headlamp bar, front and rear bumpers and 'D' lamps, however, show degradation ranging from total lack of chrome to the beginnings of pitting. I must state however, to complete an unbiased picture, that the chrome on the 'new' exterior door handles, badge bar and boot hinges seems to be holding up well. But, oh! that headlamp bar; it's a disgrace!

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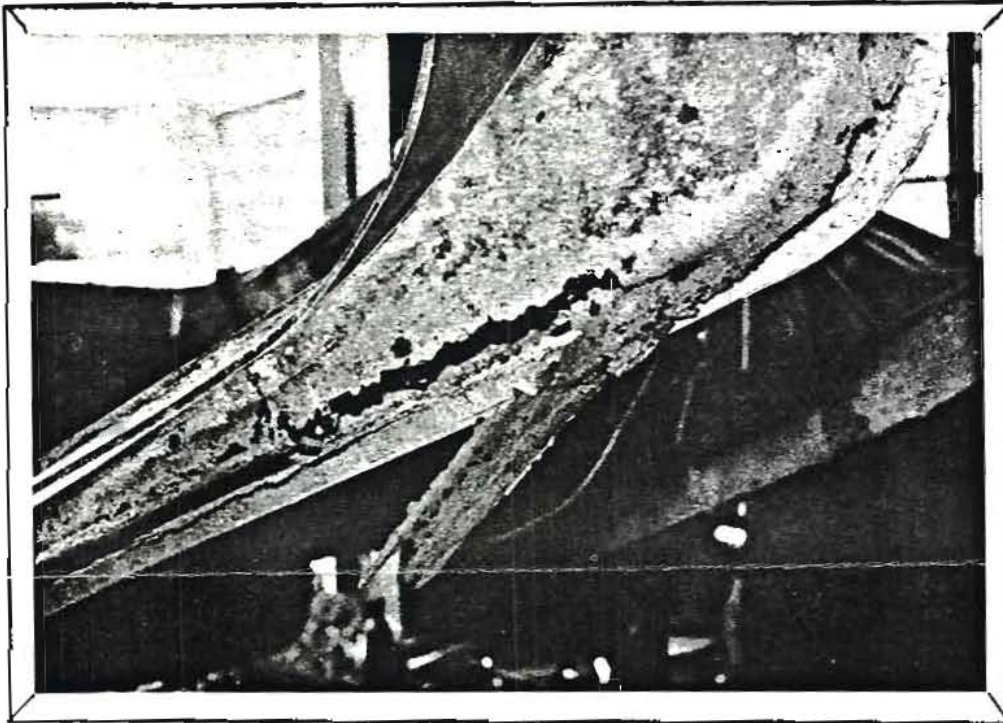
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THE ARDILL FAMILY M.G. YT  
Part II.

Parts were obtained from local suppliers, imported direct from the U.K. and some from wrecking yards and swap meetings. In addition other owners of YT's were written to and some were able to help with some hard to get items. Some other items were fabricated.

The cars were totally dismantled with the exception of the diff centres and the gearboxes. These items were given to an understanding mechanic who checked them, declared the diff centre O.K. and did some work on the gearbox including the replacement of some bearings.



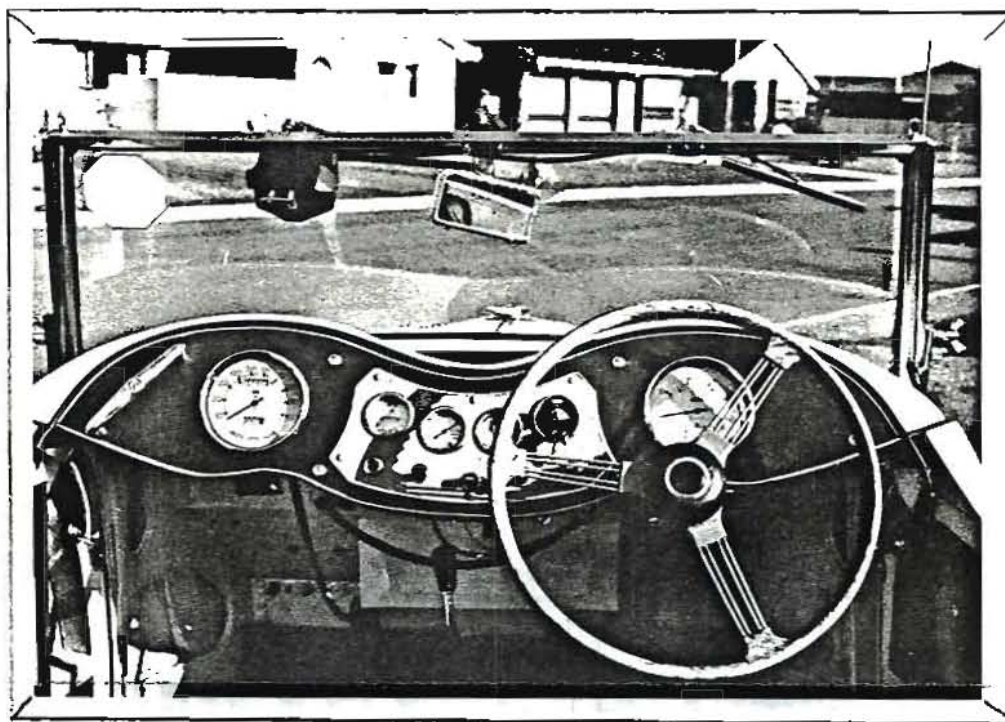
EXAMPLE OF RUST - SILLS

The block, crankshaft and camshaft were selected from the dismantled power plant components and taken to a machine shop for checking and machining. The block was bored to suit oversize pistons and the crankshaft ground to suit undersize bearing. Building up of the camshaft was necessary and new bearings were fitted. New valves, springs and valve guides together with a slight surface skim were included in the programme for restoration of the head. Assembly of the engine components was carried out very carefully with lots of care being given to the installation of seals and gaskets. Despite all the care the dreaded XPAG rear bearing leak materialized. Thus one of the last stages of restoration involved the motor being removed from the car and the rear seal replaced along with a judicious application of silastic to cure the problem.

The chassis, body, guards etc. were sand blasted and primed. After necessary repairs being effected the chassis was painted with black Acran two pack paint which gave a very hard and durable finish to facilitate future cleaning. The body, guards and various panels were taken to the panel beater who set about repairing the dings and bumps accumulated over the years. He also directed his attentions to the rusted sills, spare wheel compartment floor and rear seat floor.



While this was in progress I removed the door skins from their wooden frames - a painstaking job - and then replaced the rotted sections of the frames and reglued and tightened up the whole frames. The door skins were then cleaned, painted on the inside, reassembled and then taken to the panel shop for exterior painting. The spare chassis was also taken to the panel beater to ensure that the body was set up properly - especially while the sills were replaced.



DASHBOARD DURING RESTORATION - GAUGES INSTALLED

After much deliberation Molly and I selected the original YT ivory as the body work colour. The original paint formula was obtained and the Acran paint mixed to the formula to ensure originality.

I built up a rolling chassis while the body was being repaired and painted. Front and rear suspension, brakes and steering were completely overhauled and assembled on the chassis along with repaired and painted wheels. New tyres and tubes (5.25 x 16) were imported from New Zealand, the only place where they are still made.

The body and all painted panels were collected from the panel shop, carefully taken home and I set about reassembling the body on the chassis - and the guards etc. onto the body.

All miscellaneous small parts were cleaned and painted before reassembly and where necessary nuts and bolts were hand painted after assembly.

The assembled motor and gearbox was installed, later to be removed in an attempt to stem the rear bearing drip which I now accept in the same manner as Nuffield did when they provided the drip hole in the bell housing.

Gradually, she grew with such items as radiator, hoses, generator, starter, carbies, battery, gauges etc. being installed.

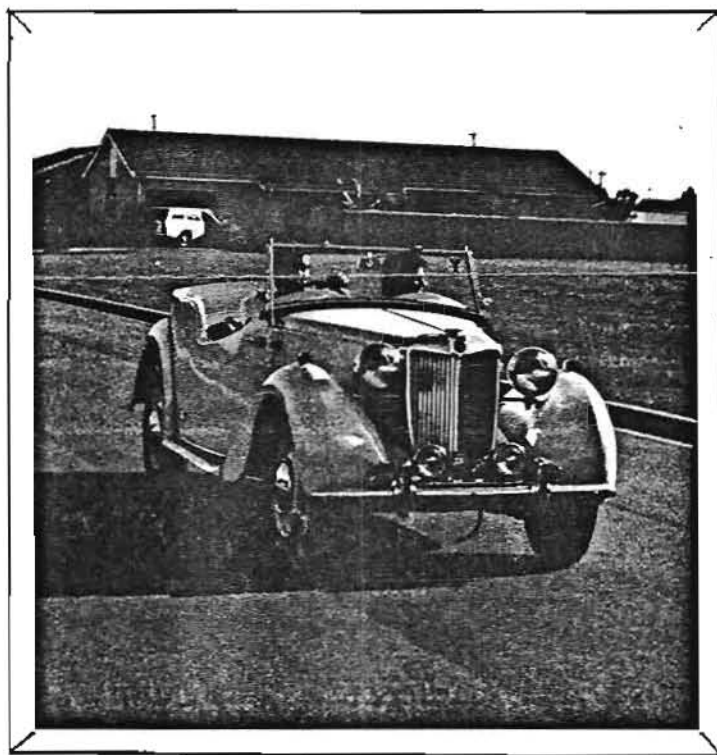
Templates for the floor boards and boot floor were made from cardboard and new sections were cut from 3/8" marine ply and fitted to the car after painting.

The whole process was not quite this organised and I made my share of mistakes and occasionally got the assembly out of sequence.

eg: The petrol tank was not fitted prior to bolting the body onto the chassis and proved to be the subject of much juggling and cursing. Similarly renewal of pedal shaft bushes was overlooked and proved an arduous task with the body in place.

However, apart from these various problems caused by my inexperience, the project proceeded and suddenly I realised YT 3779 was mobile.

What a thrill that first trip around the block was - albeit the fact that driver and passenger were seated on boxes.



THE FIRST TRIP AROUND THE BLOCK

After this experience work proceeded at an increased rate - hood irons were cleaned and fitted and much to my consternation were way out of plumb. No amount of coaxing could fix this problem and finally in desperation about 1" was cut out of one section and one anchor point relocated. It appeared that the assembly may have been "skew-wiff" since new.

Front seat buckets were repaired and new tacking strips made up and fitted. All the rechromed goodies were attached and finally the car was ready for trimming in green leather and vinyl which I had purchased some 2½ years earlier. The hood, tonneau and side curtains were made from brown salt and pepper material very similar to the original.