

## THE CLASSIC 'Y'

GMB

Volume 10. No.82.

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

August 1987.

### EDITORIAL

Some information recently came to light (provided by Mr. L.C. Morriss of [redacted] Essex) concerning 'Y' Types with 'MG' registrations. We already had on the Register 'MG7317' and 'MG7437' with a report some years ago that another was for sale in London. Apparently, back in the sixties, the following additional cars also existed: 'MG7340', 'MG7309' and 'MG7255'. Now 'MG7317' is a 1953 YB and that registration was transferred to it on 26th July 1956 (the car was previously registered 'TPG236'). 'MG7317' was certainly not a 'University Motors' car so I doubt very much whether any of the other 'MG' registered cars were. Unfortunately nothing is known about any of the other cars except that 'MG7437' is a 1948 YA. Thus it is interesting to speculate whether some enterprising car dealer was responsible for the wholesale transfer of a small batch of 'MG' registrations onto 'Y' Types sometime in the fifties. The 'MG' registration numbers quoted are, by the way, pre-war allocations.

Some unfortunate news I have to relate is that, for the time being, we will be unable to supply any more photocopies of workshop manuals, owners handbooks and sales brochures. I will let you know in this column if the necessary facilities enabling these publications to be produced are re-instated in the future.

We do have an additional 'regalia' item now available, however. Details are as follows:

#### Embroidered Blazer/Overalls Badges

(showing the Register's emblem in black and white)  
(same as windscreen sticker)

£6.50 each (including UK postage)

(please allow 4 - 6 weeks for delivery as these are ordered and produced on a 'one-off' basis)

23rd July 1987.

Membership Secretary/Registrar: J. G. Lawson, [redacted]  
Spares Secretary: A. Brier, [redacted]  
Eastern United States Chapter: Mrs. C. M. Luer, [redacted] New Jersey,  
U.S. West Coast Contact: G. R. Skopecek III, [redacted] California

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## Register Number 128

Chassis Number	Y3981
Engine Number	SC/13519
Licence Plate	UMG71
Body Number	n/k
Sub-Type	YA
Year of Manuf'	49
Owner's Name	Griffiths RF
Owner Number	873
Car Location	Cheshire ENG
Exterior Colour	Black
Interior Colour	G

## Register Number 153

Chassis Number	Y6906
Engine Number	SC/D56466
Licence Plate	KKV462
Body Number	n/k
Sub-Type	YA
Year of Manuf'	51
Owner's Name	Clough D
Owner Number	870
Car Location	Co. Durham ENG
Exterior Colour	Sun Bronze
Interior Colour	B

## Register Number 291

Chassis Number	YB0970
Engine Number	SC2/17851
Licence Plate	NOM989
Body Number	6851/
Sub-Type	YB
Year of Manuf'	53
Owner's Name	Williams D
Owner Number	790
Car Location	W. Midlands ENG
Exterior Colour	Black
Interior Colour	B

## Register Number 644

Chassis Number	YB1154
Engine Number	SC2/17106
Licence Plate	HDN533
Body Number	6769/
Sub-Type	YB
Year of Manuf'	53
Owner's Name	Phillips L
Owner Number	876
Car Location	New Jersey USA
Exterior Colour	Black
Interior Colour	B

## CARS FOR SALE:

- 301 1949 YT. "4-passenger touring roadster. Only 877 ever built! Complete restoration 1982. Driven less than 1500 miles since. 1st-in-class 1984 GoF WEST. BRG with tan leather interior, black hood, tonneau and side curtains. Built-in hydraulic jacking system. Luggage boot. Mechanically perfect concours winner. Pictures on request. \$17,500. Dave Wellington [REDACTED] [REDACTED], WA 98006. ph: [REDACTED]."
- 128 "YA Saloon. 1949. UMG71. Tax and MoT to 1988. Original, including some spares. £2,000. Tel: [REDACTED]."
- 64 1952 YB. "Re-sprayed vermillion. In superb condition. Nine months M.O.T., taxed, in daily use. Must be seen. £2,750 ono. Tel: [REDACTED] (Middlesex)."
- 769 1951 YA. "Driven regularly, requires some attention to make perfect. Intermittent history back to 1966. Offers around £1,950. Tel: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for further details."

## PARTS FOR SALE:

"Sales folder for TD Midget and 1½ litre Saloon, export edition, March 1950. Perfect condition. £10. Tel: [REDACTED]."

Original M.G. 'Y' Type literature for sale:

1. "Trader" Service Data No.144. Supplement to 'The Motor Trader' 2nd June 1948. 10½" x 8" 8pp.
2. YB Sales Brochure. 10½" x 8½" 8pp colour (no ref).
3. Illustrated List of Parts. Issue 1, 1947 (ref no. 27/10 (49747)). Red cover.
4. Workshop Manual (Series YB). 1958 (ref no. 29/15 (18073) 10/58-1m).

Also, brand new set (8) of Mintex brake linings for 'Y' Type. Prefer to swap for M.G. literature.

Contact: Mr. R.H. Mace, [REDACTED] Cornwall, [REDACTED]. Tel: [REDACTED].

## PARTS WANTED

Sun-roof, complete; set of door check straps; fuel filler cap. Contact: Mr. D.G. Richings, [REDACTED] Oxford, [REDACTED].

## CARS FOR SALE:

- 90 "1951 M.G. YA. 'UMG422'. Tax and M.O.T. Original logbooks and handbook. All M.O.T.s for last 15 years. Well maintained and extremely reliable. Everything works, even the clock (sometimes). Interior good apart from driver's seat (spare leather panel available). Needs respray as the paint is flaking. Very solid - very little rust. £1,700 ono. Spares available. Contact: Colin Dye on [REDACTED]."

SOLD.

SOLD.

## Wedding Day Car

As a member of the MG Owners Club, my fiancée and I were hoping to find a fellow member who would be prepared to offer their car and act as a chauffeur on our Wedding Day on September 12th, 1987.

We are to be married at St Pauls Church, Broughton, Near Wrexham, Clwyd; so obviously it would be an advantage to find a member within a reasonable driving distance to this area.

The car we would ideally like is a 4-seater, preferably in white or black, say an MG SA or similar, though we are aware that this request may be difficult to fulfil.

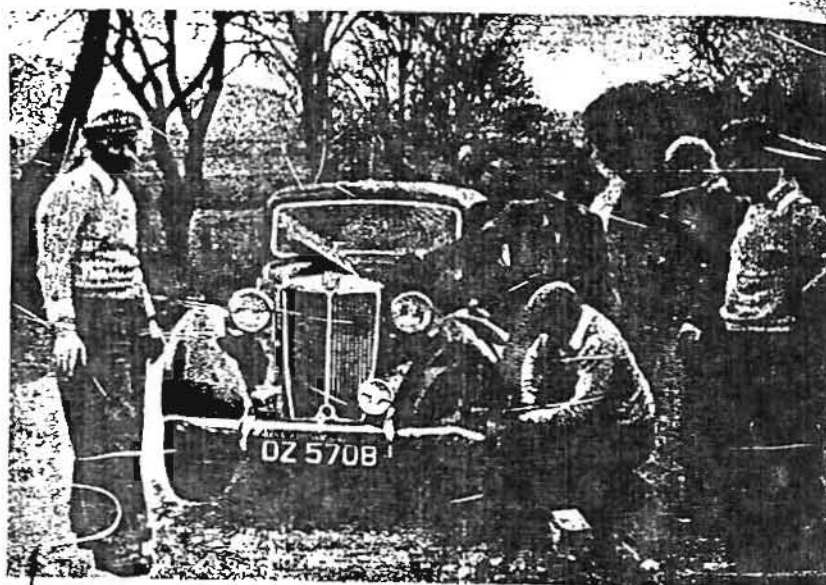
We look forward to hearing from anyone who may be able to help

TREVOR PIERCE-JONES  
Clwyd Area Secretary

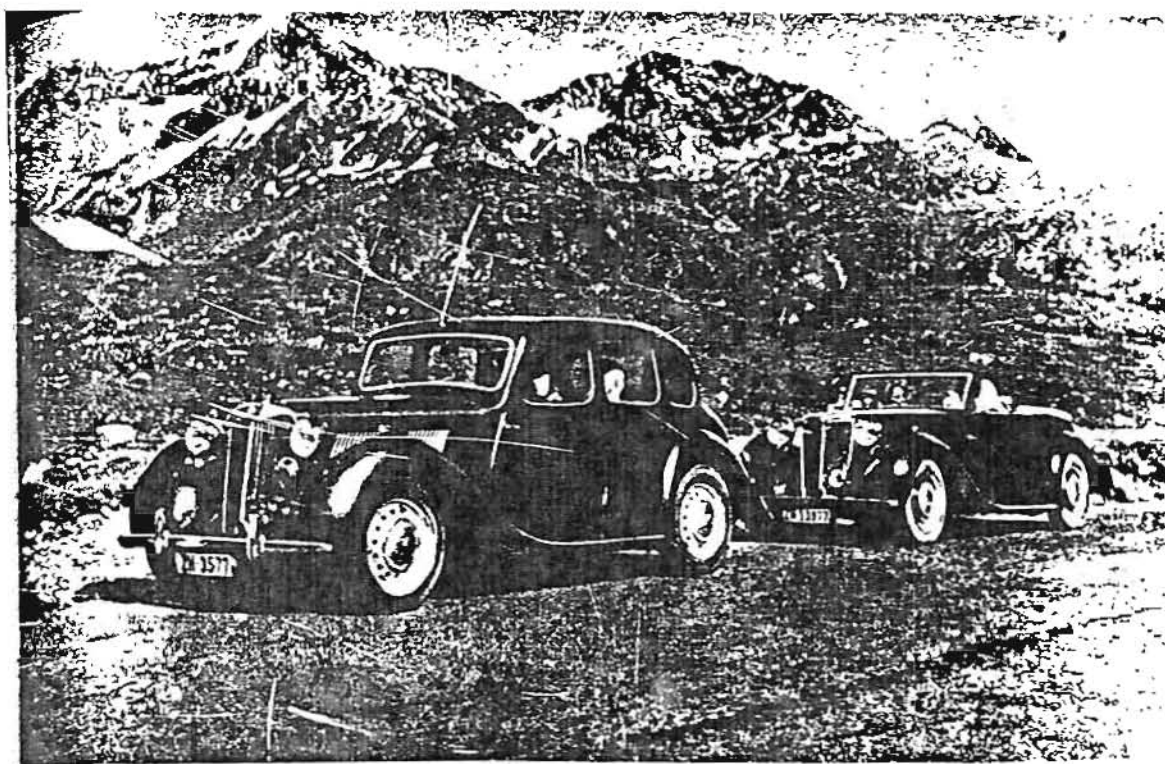
HELP - can anyone provide a pre-1950's MG Saloon for use as a wedding car in September, Newbury area. If you can help please ring Steve on [redacted] (Surrey) eves & wends.

THE AUTOCAR, 30 APRIL 1954

## CIRCUIT OF IRELAND : continued



Dr. E. S. Dorman (M.G.) is likely to remember Killarney's lakes and fells in the Circuit of Ireland Trial this year because of an unfortunate encounter in the district. Here he is straightening out sheet metalware.



Left: A 1½-litre M.G. saloon and drop-head coupé at a roadside halt in Switzerland

The photo at top right arrived after compilation of the article which appears in this issue on 'Y' Type competition use and successes. It is taken from 'The Autocar' of 30th April 1954. That which appears directly above shows a YB fitted with what appear to be TD wheels and, behind it, a Reinbolt & Christie converted 'YRC'. This photo comes from 'The Autocar' of 8th May 1953. Both photos were recently discovered by David Mullen who has been responsible for bringing us most of the 'Y' Type-related 'Autocar' material which has appeared in these pages over the years. Both photos are, of course, reproduced with the permission of the current publishers of 'Autocar'.





# SUCCESS AT SILVERSTONE

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PRODUCTION TOURING CAR RACE

FIRST IN CLASS "F"

1,100 — 1,500 c.c.

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1½ LITRE SALOON

(Subject to official confirmation)

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## 'Y' TYPE COMPETITION USE & SUCCESSES.

The 'Y' Type, of course, was never designed to be a competitive sports car but, nevertheless, it had its moments with those drivers whose preference is the racing or rallying of saloon cars. And it was particularly useful and popular at 'club' level.

After the Second World War the competitive world of motor sport took some while to regain its feet. Italy, however, was relatively quick off the mark and re-introduced the famous 1,000-mile road race, the 'Mille Miglia' in 1947. 'The Autocar' magazine sent John Dugdale and another staff member with a brand-new 'Y' Type, provided by the factory and registered 'DRX557', to cover the event.

In the British public's eye, the Monte Carlo Rally was the major European rallying event. Before the war cars had started from points all over Europe to finish in that most attractive and affluent area of the Mediterranean. No doubt the glamour and wealth associated with Monte Carlo accounted in part for the public's interest in this event. To seasoned rally drivers, however, the 'Monte', whilst attracting a great deal of welcome publicity, was never the most demanding, nor the most rewarding rally event. There was no Monte Carlo Rally after the war until 1949. On that occasion Glasgow was the only British starting point and the average journey which entrants, from whatever starting point, had to make to reach Monte Carlo was 1,955 miles. In 1950, an extreme winter, only five cars made it to Monte Carlo without penalty. In that year 'CWL543', an Almond Green 'YA' was entered for the rally, driven by experienced rally and racing driver Betty Haig with Barbara Marshall as co-driver. In 1951 Major and Mrs A. Pownall entered their 'Y' in the rally and appear to have made it to Monte Carlo, coming 45th in the final test. In 1952 only 15 cars made it to Monte Carlo without penalty.

Meanwhile, on the domestic scene, that other prestigious event, the R.A.C. Rally had been re-instated. In the 1951 R.A.C. Rally 'Y' Types were successful (this time in the under 1500cc closed cars class). First in class was J. Readings, with Len Shaw third and a little further down the field a Mrs. L. E. Grounds, in 23rd place, is also thought to have driven a 'Y'. Also competing in a 'Y' was F. M. Baker.

The 1951 1,000 mile Circuit of Ireland Trial saw at least five 'Y' Types competing, known drivers being J. M. McCaughan, R. J. Caldwell, J. E. McGrath, D. A. Wilkins and Mrs. J. J. Flynn. Mrs. Flynn won the Ladies' Trophy.

Another famous lady rally driver of the times was Lady Samuelson. She is known to have owned a 1950 'YA' (registration number 'LP0900') but there is no record of it having been entered for any competitive events.

In 1953 three specially-built and prepared YBs ('HMO908; 909 and 910') were entered for the R.A.C. Rally of that year. They were crewed by R. E. Holt, J. L. Shaw and G. R. Holt respectively. At the end of that season Len Shaw bought 'HMO909' from the manufacturers and retains it, in rally trim, to this day. He and the car came sixth in the General Category and won class and team prizes in the 1953 Rally and, more latterly, the car took part in the commemorative R.A.C. Golden Fifty Rally in 1982, again driven by Len Shaw!

Len Shaw had previously been sold 'OWL543' after the 1950 Monte by John Thornley, the then General Manager of M.G., and had raced and rallied it quite successfully. The names of Shaw, Readings, Baker, and Grant (the latter referred to later) etc appear again and again in reports of competitive events during the early fifties (for example in the British Rally of June 1951). In many of these events these gentlemen drove 'Y' Type M.G.s. Regrettably, 'HMO908', 'HMO910' and 'OWL543' have, in the intervening years, all been scrapped.

One name which is very much associated with M.G. in competitive events, and particularly with 'Y' Types, is that of Dick Jacobs. It was he who John Thornley credits as being the driving force in the early fifties in persuading M.G. to re-enter motor sport, albeit to begin with semi-officially. His specially tuned YB, (chassis number YB0414, 'UHK111') won its class three years running (1952, '53 & '54) in the B.R.D.C. Silverstone Production Touring Car Races sponsored by the 'Daily Express'. The car was, incidentally, driven to and from Silverstone on each occasion and not trailed to the events. In the 1952 race the YB beat three Jowett Javelins in class 'F' (1100 to 1500cc). It still exists today, in Kent. Dick Jacobs also received the last YB off production line (chassis number YB1551). This car was given a special 'full-width' coupe body and was raced extensively. It was last heard of in 1979 so may still exist.

In the 1953 Silverstone race another 'Y' Type, (a YB?), race number 15 owned by Gregor Grant, the editor of 'Autosport' magazine, and loaned for the race to George Phillips, was also entered. It came third in class.

An achievement of a different sort was accomplished by the well-known record-breaker Goldie Gardner in Belgium in July 1950. An M.G. distributor from Brighton by the name of Richard Benn believed that the 'Y' Type might be able to achieve 100 mph if it was appropriately tuned. He thus set about having his car tuned to Stage V with the aid of Syd Enever and Reg 'Jacko' Jackson from the Abingdon factory. Included in the tuning specification was the fitting of a Shorrocks supercharger giving 6½lb of boost. Furthermore, the underneath of the car was improved aerodynamically and oversize rear tyres were fitted. On the Jabbeke Road in Belgium the car, driven by Major Gardner, made several runs, the best of which recorded a speed of 107.36mph. The average came out at 104.725mph for the flying mile and 104.713mph for the 5 kilometre distance. All these speeds were officially timed and verified. In relating this story I feel I must put the record straight as regards the state of the car after the several high speed runs had been made. There is a recurrent myth in M.G. circles that after these runs the car's engine 'blew up' or 'made loud noises'. This myth is repeated again and again in many publications on the marque M.G. However, to clarify matters I quote from the article on the subject written by Russell Lowry which appeared in 'Motoring' magazine, the house magazine of the Nuiffeld Organisation. "Then, having satisfied his own quiet, unshaken argument, Richard Benn stepped into his closed carriage and motored himself sedately home to Brighton....".

Although not strictly 'competitive' Sidney J. Perelman's journey from Paris to Peking in his YT in 1978 deserves a mention here. The idea initially was for the 'Sunday Times' to publish a series of articles written by the American humourist and traveller recounting his journey. The black YT had



been bought by Perelman in Bangkok in 1949 and for a long time had been stored in the premises of a bankrupt delicatessen in Philadelphia. Before commencing its epic trip to Peking it had only covered 19,000 miles in the intervening twenty-nine years. British Leyland donated a Land Rover to accompany the YT and two other M.G. enthusiasts went along to look after the car's needs, taking with them a large quantity of spares. Perelman and the car made it to Peking (via France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Iran, India, Burma and Hong Kong) although, sadly, once the trip was over he became ill and, nine months later, he passed away. His observations on the trip have, alas, never been published. It is worth noting in conclusion, as symptomatic of the world in which we live today, that by the time the YT reached Peking all its M.G. badges had disappeared; stolen by souvenir-hunters.

In more recent years Frank Vautier became notable for his spirited performances in what started life as a 1951 Sun Bronze 'YA'. This car was extensively modified with advice from Dick Jacobs during its long competitive life (it still occasionally appears at 'club' events today). Among the modifications carried out were the fitting of larger twin S.V. carburettors, a ZA Magnette rear axle, two front anti-roll bars, MGA disc brakes at the front, radial tyres and eventually a supercharger. And the car was certainly 'modified' in quite a different way one day in the summer of 1974 at Wiscombe Park Hillclimb when it was rolled onto its roof on taking a hairpin a little too fast! Once the car was righted, the driver took up his position behind the wheel and the 'Y' was able to continue to the top of the hill!

In closing I should like to thank 'Autocar' magazine for giving me their permission to reproduce the advertisement, 'Success At Silverstone' from their issue of 16th May 1952. I should also like to thank the following for their help in researching this article: David Mullen, Colin Dye, J.S.R. Bridges and for supplying the photograph of 'UHK111', Harry Chapman and Alan White.

*John Lawson*

