

## ❖ Committee Members Details - 2000

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# Y Type Newsletter

## YOUR NEW COMMITTEE FOR 2000

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### The Missing Power Mystery

I have been ministering to Y4245 for fifty years now, but found last week that it still retains its capacity to surprise. The story may amuse, and might even help, some of you.

I had blown a cylinder head gasket, and in the course of replacing it had decarbonised and ground in the valves - a process once only too familiar. (In the fifties with pool petrol you had to decarbonise every 6000 miles). After reassembly, the engine was a bit reluctant to start but warmed up uneventfully for about ten minutes to enable me to set the valve clearances. The surprise came when I backed the car out of the garage and tried to drive up a slight slope - there was an almost complete lack of power.

Turning the starting handle confirmed that there was nothing wrong with the compression. The piston in the carburettor seemed perfectly free. Removing the plug leads in turn confirmed that each cylinder was contributing equally. I "retired hurt" to ponder and read the literature.

I concluded that something must have happened to the carburettor, the settings on which had not been altered. A clue of sorts was in an SU pamphlet AUC9612 of January 1959 in which

*I read "Cleaning the suction chamber and piston ... should be done at intervals of twelve months for horizontal and semi-downdraught carburettors and at three months for full downdraught carburettors .... clean the inside bore of the suction chamber and the two outside diameters of the piston and reassemble dry with a few spots of oil on the piston rod only ....."*

This passage led me, by a process of lateral thinking, to wonder whether in the course of lying the carb down during dismantling the engine, I had managed, partially, to block the passageway in the base of the piston which produces a vacuum when the throttle is opened, and lifts the piston. Examination of the piston revealed some 'gunge' inside the base. The upshot was that after scrupulously cleaning the piston as per pamphlet and removing the aforesaid 'gunge', I found that all my engine power had miraculously returned!

Of course this may all be illusion. You could easily establish the facts by blocking the hole in question (e.g. with chewing gum) to varying degrees and testing the effects on engine flexibility. But I stress you could. I've had enough trouble for one month, and am letting well alone. ■

**Peter Hudson**



## The Australian Take Away Grille

I recently splashed out a whole week's pension on one of the Car Club's new Gold Anniversary Badges. I figured that it would make a perfect balance for our own Golden Jubilee Badge.

When it arrived, I realised that Head Office had also sent me a problem. It would have been easy if I had only fitted our badge on the bottom half of the grille, which I could reach by sticking my arm up from underneath, but I hadn't. On that occasion, I had the grille off of the car, and thought the badge looked so much better towards the top of the grille. So in order to achieve a balance, the new badge would have to go on the top half also.

So, it's off with the grille again, which involved removing the headlamps, headlamp brackets, wiring etc... Unbolting the grille from the radiator, and removing it together with the headlamp cross tube. Fitting the new badge in the appropriate spot and then reassembling everything. This then left me

with the problem of getting the headlamps set up to MOT satisfaction. My local garage let me have the use of their beamsetter, so I am now night-legal once again, and the grille looks great. Of course, I could have fitted a badge bar, but everyone does that!

Now, all of this would not have been necessary if only my Australian friend, Alf Luckman, had written to me a few weeks earlier. As his car was having a short rest from the road due to a small matter of a broken crank, he thought I might be interested in an adaption to his grille that meant that he did not have to disturb the headlamps or the wiring at all, and the lamps remained properly focused.

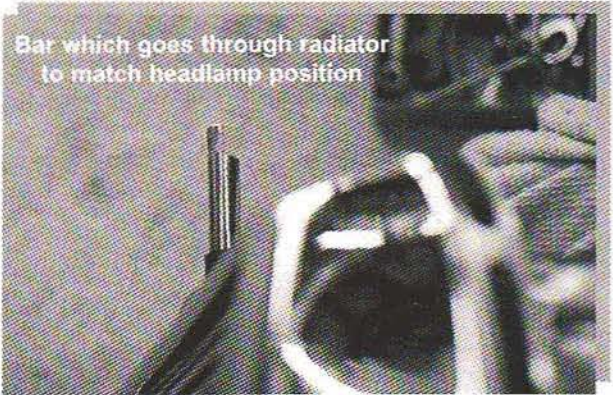
This he achieved by substituting the tube with a solid bar of the same diameter. This is then cut to the exact length between the headlamp support brackets. He then made up two small adaptors from the same bar which are drilled, tapped, and locked into the support brackets. The ends of the bar are then sectioned, drilled, and tapped to match up with the adaptors.

So in future, if he needs to remove the grille to work on the rad etc, he just removes the two bolts joining the bar to the adaptor. The headlamps stay undisturbed on the wings.

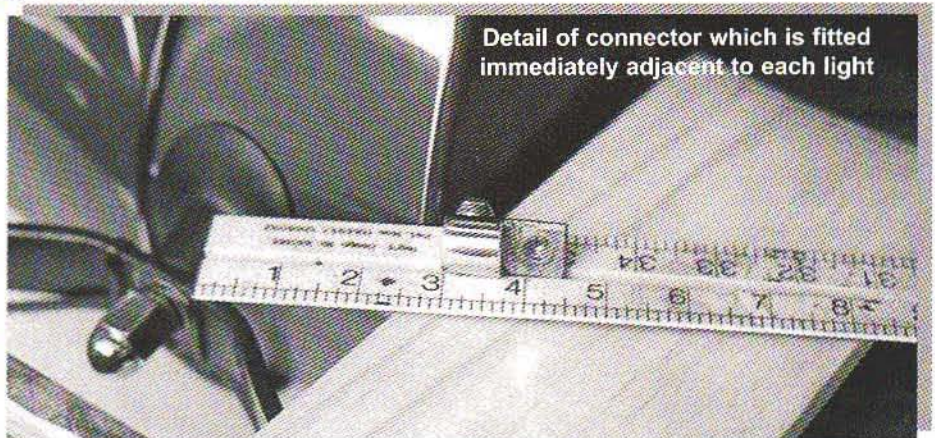
Simple but effective. I hope the photos explain it all. ■

**Dennis Doubtfire**

Bar which goes through radiator to match headlamp position



Detail of connector which is fitted immediately adjacent to each light



Left-hand headlamp fitting

## The Italian Job - Influences on M.G.

Try the name Zagato on most motoring enthusiasts and you will probably wait a while for them to find the link to M.G.s, but be assured there really is a link!

Founded post World War 1 as a family coachbuilders, Zagato is now headed by the grandson of the founder, and still trades today as one of the Italian styling houses who interact with some of the world's top manufacturers.

As early as 1928, British car manufacturers were beating a path to the Italian company for design and inspiration, with Rolls Royce jostling for attention within a plethora of Alfa Romeo models. The Second World War saw a move to lorry manufacture for Zagato, and a relocation to new premises in 1946. M.G. models, post WWII, included the Y type, a 1250cc XPAG-engined model available as a saloon or, (mostly for export), or four seater tourer. The Y type was in production from 1947 - 53 and some cars left the factory as chassis only for coach building elsewhere in the world.

1948 saw Zagato commissioned to put a new bodywork onto the Y chassis as a "concept car" known as the M.G. Panoramica (Zagato listings are inconsistent, in that occasionally the M.G. Panoramica is listed as a 1500cc engine rather than the standard

1250). The Panoramica design ... curved side windows, "skylight" extension to the windscreen, fared in lights ... had been developed on other cars, including Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Maserati and (yes it's true!) Ferrari! As far as is known, M.G. is the only non-Italian marque to have been styled as a Zagato Panoramica, and only one car was ever constructed.

In an effort to find more of this rare machine, contacts were made in October 1998 with Zagato's HQ and Club in Italy, with no result until October 1999! A brief letter from the Club Secretary (in Italian) was received, confirming the above information, and forwarding a printed copy of an illustration of the car in question. Efforts are now being redoubled to find exactly what records, designs and details still exist for the M.G. Panoramica.

Before any replies arrive along the Michael Caine "Not a lot of people know this, but..." the existence of the Bertone-designed, Turin-exhibited, Arnolt-produced model of the TD, is well known, with Arnolt cars turning up at M.G. car shows throughout UK and Europe, but I bet "Not a lot of people know that" the M.G. Y type was only the second British model to be worked on by Zagato, and that the Panoramica-bodied version had such illustrious co-models in the 1947 - 49 era! ■

**Andrew Coulson**



## Morris X-series Engine Water Pump

The handbook given with every Nuffield, and later BMC car, for vehicles fitted with the 'X' series of engines states: "Every 500 miles give 3 or 4 strokes of grease gun." This is shown on the foldout 'Lubrication' page, and refers to the steering, suspension, and the water pump. With advances in lubrication since the late 1930s, this mileage could, probably, now be extended to 1000, but knowing M.G. owners, many will keep to the 500. The grades of grease referred to, as those recommended by the manufacturer, are history now, items such as 'Duckhams Adcol H.P.G.', or even Duckhams Laminoid Soft Grease', 'Mobilgrease No.2', 'Shell Retinax' and others, are long gone. A modern equivalent would be Castrol LM for instance, being a general purpose chassis and bearing grease.

The water pump that appeared on the Morris 'XPJM' 1140cc engine, and the similar Wolseley 'XPJW' unit, was very modern for the day. The vast majority of side-valve family saloons then still ran using thermo-syphon cooling and no water pump. M.G. used the same engine, but bored out to the 'XPAG' 1250cc, and strengthened the reciprocating parts. That water pump was there though, the cooling system being an "impeller assisted thermo-syphon" type. That simply means hot water rises, and the pump helps it on its way, though in the 'X' series, the actual water flow is along the cylinder head, not up from the cylinder block.

The pump feeds the water to the back of the block, up into the head, and thence forward to the thermostat, and up into the radiator. This efficient system ensures all the hot valve seats get proper cooling. Air flow cools the water, and it sinks to the bottom, to be grasped by the pump once more, and sent round again.

Out of mind, out of sight. That saying applies to the water pump, as we so often pay it little attention. The construction of our M.G. XPAG water pump is typical of its day, a good example of late 1930s British engineering. Two ball bearings supported a shaft, with an impeller one end seated on a carbon faced water seal; the other had a belt-driven pulley and fan attached. One bearing sits up against a cast internal face, and the other has circlips to locate it. There were no taper-shaft fittings, but the impeller was secured to the shaft by a taper-pin, and the pulley by a woodruff-key and a split-pinned nut. Studying the diagram shows it is quite an easy item to strip down, but on assembly do not over tighten the castled nut in the pulley, or you can strip the small threads.

The workshop manuals of the day explain how to strip and assemble the pump. Today,

the book would simply say 'replace' it and throw the old one away. During its life, the carbon water sealing arrangement changed often, though most were interchangeable. Today, you can buy a new remanufactured pump for about £55, or a kit to repair your old one for about £30, from your M.G. Specialist.

By the early 1950s, the same water pump was still fitted with minor modifications to the M.G. sports cars and 'Y' saloons, and the small 'XPAW' Wolseley 4/44. The grease nipple had been deleted on the Wolseley after car number 6809, but the service charts for the TF still show it requiring attention with the grease gun. Another difference was that the type of grease nipple had changed after the war, allowing the use of a high-pressure gun. Care must be taken with this powerful type, as it can generate thousands of pounds of pressure, and blast the seals out of the pump. Signs of old age and wear, are water dripping from the drain hole under the pump body, and the ability to rock the fan blades by their tips. As the pump is made from cast iron, including the impeller, crustaceans can "grow" on the impeller blades, and seriously affect the efficiency of its action, not unlike the similar item fitted into your washing machine of today.

Some of the quickest ways to ruin a water pump are to run with the fan belt too tight, not use a suitable anti-corrosive anti-freeze, and forgetting to grease it. ■

Neil Cairns

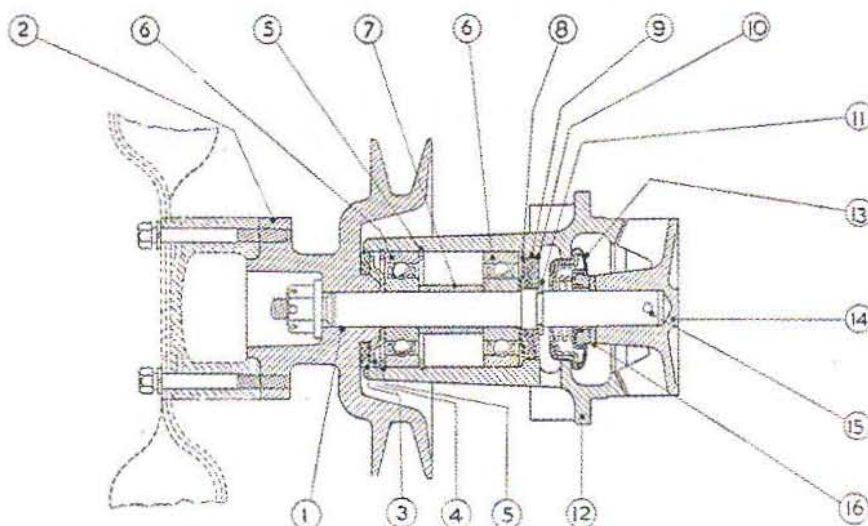


Fig. D.2  
The assembly of the water pump.

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Spindle.                 | 9. Felt washer (rear).       |
| 2. Fan pulley.              | 10. Retaining washer (rear). |
| 3. Felt washer (front).     | 11. Pump spindle circlip.    |
| 4. Retaining cover (front). | 12. Pump body.               |
| 5. Bearing circlips.        | 13. Seal.                    |
| 6. Bearings.                | 14. Impeller vane.           |
| 7. Distance tube.           | 15. Taper pin.               |
| 8. Retaining cover (rear).  | 16. Gland seating washer.    |

## South African Special

Whilst recently researching various bodies fitted to T types, I came across some pictures of a "Special" that was fitted to a Y type. It appeared in the early 1950s around the Nairobi area, and was campaigned by Colonel R. T. Grantham, Managing Director of the Nuffield Distributors in East Africa. Judging by the photographs, it was clearly quite successful.

Colonel Grantham was certainly a match for anything in his class (up to 1500cc) and even managed wins in the "up to 2000cc" class. Perhaps someone reading this knows more details about the car, or whatever became of it?? ■

Ian Rendle



ABOVE - After a successful day of racing, Colonel Grantham receives the trophy for winning the 1500cc class, from Mr Kaye Don, the famous racing driver of the late 1920s.