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NEWSLETTER



WELCOME TO THE Y TYPE NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our six-monthly Newsletter. In these trying times it does look as if the hard work of our scientists and the NHS may not only have provided us with protection against Covid but also an opportunity to travel and meet up once more.

This issue includes a couple of articles, which I hope you all may find of interest, plus some artistic delicacies that some of

you may never have seen. In this context I would draw your attention to impressions and paintings of MGs that the Car Club are promoting and may be on display at the combined Triumph and MG Event to be held at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, over three days: Friday 13-Sunday August 15 this summer.

The articles include an excellent submission by Mike Silk, an entertaining recollection by Peter Sharp, artistic impressions of a well-known YT and YB.

A humorous note, by Peter again, on the simple spare that you must have. Then finally a plea for someone to run the Y Type Register spares shop for us please.

AN IRISH MG YT

I am sure that most of you are aware of Mike Silk's wonderful YT which he has owned for 50 years. He has kindly written a highly informative article about the car, how he discovered it, the restoration undertaken and the regular use that he and his wife Sue have put in it over the years.

IR 4304 - MG One-and-a-Quarter Litre Tourer (YT) - 1949

Chassis Number:- YT/EXR/2744.Engine Number: - XPAG/TR/12665.

My YT was originally an export to Ireland and was previously owned by Dr Brendan O'Hara, later on a well-known figure in vintage racing in the Dublin area. As manufactured, she was painted black with beige upholstery. It is thought that some – if not all – Irish Tourers might have been assembled in Cork from CKD (Completely Knocked Down) kits. So perhaps he was supporting local industry!

He had bought IR 4304 new in November 1949 while he was living in Tullamore, County Offaly, where I believe he also worked. He only owned her for about six months and he told me once—or I might have been told – that it was the only new car he ever bought. He had not been greatly impressed with the

performance, so she was sold locally and was last taxed in October 1965. Not too long afterwards he acquired one of the prototype TR2s – TS2 which was over there for an Irish motorshow. Brendan was a member of the Irish Veteran and Vintage Car Club (IVVCC) and that is where I met him. I had joined the IVCC through a friend with a TD, Trevor Storey. I was living and working in Dublin from early in 1971 and had failed to find an MG T Type at the time. There were hardly any out there and certainly not one in my price range. Importing one to Ireland may have been a possibility at the time, but wasn't something that would have been very easy to do on my very limited budget.

IR 4304 had been bought for Trevor Storey's mother as a second car. (Trevor's father had just finished restoring a 1920s Star tourer and was setting about a Lancia Lambda). She did not really like that idea and settled on an MGA instead. Although I saw the Tourer quite regularly, I never thought to ask about buying her. In fact I had never seen one before and didn't even know the model existed. When Trevor's father offered her to me for £90 I jumped at the chance. She appeared to be reasonably sound, and an MG – what more could you want?

A bank loan for the purchase was arranged – and enough to replace the



IR 4303 residing in a lock-up in Dublin

hood as well. And so as a non-runner, complete with nearside front wing dent from its initial tow to Dublin, she was moved into a lock-up. The seized clutch was freed after removing the gearbox, and the car got into running order – of a sort. The day after it was finally ready for the road was race day at Mondello Park near Naas. The car was already entered in the 'MG Veteran and Vintage' handicap race at the 'Crawford's Golden 1000' race meeting. I had acquired a racing licence and it was to be the car and driver's one and only race – so far! She was driven to the race on her first significant run, then

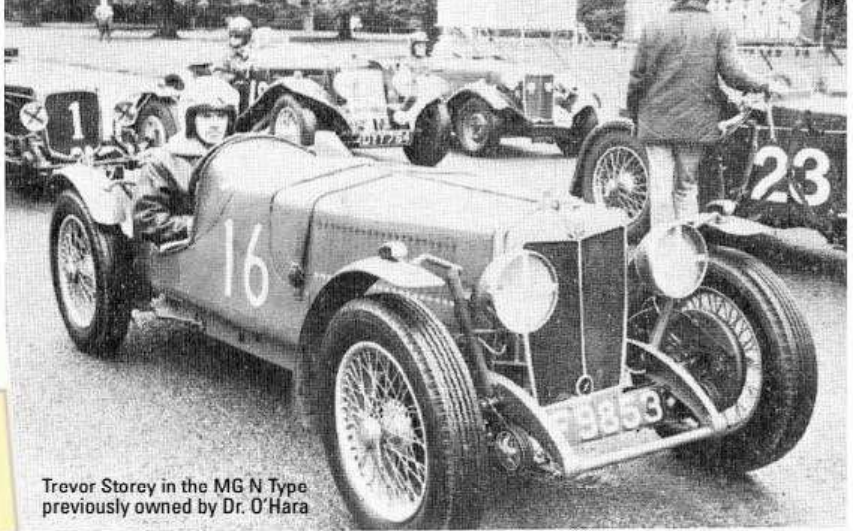


CRAWFORD'S GOLDEN 1000
SUNDAY CAR RACE

TOP 10			TOTAL - 10 LAPS		
No.	Name	Car	No.	Name	Car
1	John Hill	Ford Capri	1	John Hill	Ford Capri
2	John Hill	Ford Capri	2	John Hill	Ford Capri
3	John Hill	Ford Capri	3	John Hill	Ford Capri
4	John Hill	Ford Capri	4	John Hill	Ford Capri
5	John Hill	Ford Capri	5	John Hill	Ford Capri
6	John Hill	Ford Capri	6	John Hill	Ford Capri
7	John Hill	Ford Capri	7	John Hill	Ford Capri
8	John Hill	Ford Capri	8	John Hill	Ford Capri
9	John Hill	Ford Capri	9	John Hill	Ford Capri
10	John Hill	Ford Capri	10	John Hill	Ford Capri

CRAWFORD'S GOLDEN 1000
Motor Races Monello Park
June 30, 1972

THE MG CAR CLUB



Trevor Storey in the MG N Type previously owned by Dr. O'Hara

Entry list for Crawford's Golden 1000

stripped of passenger seats, windscreen and everything that wasn't essential and passed scrutineering. After practice, it was unsurprisingly in 'pole' position on the grid and there was quite a long wait before the next cars set off. The grid included Dick Lovell-Butt in his single-seater K3 (K3006) and the Tourer's original owner in his streamlined 'flat-iron' Fiat Balilla Special. The K3 had a couple of laps to make up and it appeared at one point that it was going to be a close finish, until a con rod bearing went and we returned to the pits with a lap to go. Not the best start to ownership!

I used her for everyday use whilst in Ireland, including a two week tour of the northern part of the country.

I brought her back to the UK when I returned in 1973. She was resprayed red not long after and used as everyday transport in the early and mid-seventies. Sue learned to drive in her and we left her parked at Luton airport for two weeks while we were away on honeymoon. I'm not sure I would do that now!

I finally got around to fitting flashing indicators for the London traffic – it had been hand signals until then. After a couple of years, the YT was really ready for a restoration, but with a young family, the car gathered dust and was laid up in various garages from the late seventies through to the early nineties. A start on restoration was made in the mid-80s, but a move to West Yorkshire in 1987 meant that it wasn't until 1993 that a complete restoration was started. This was completed very slowly. By early 2004 she was now finished in sequoia cream with a green interior and still has the original engine and back axle, but the gearbox had been replaced by a Hi Gear five-speed conversion. Although I have done a lot of the work myself, chassis and body restoration were carried out by Naylor Brothers of Shipley, and all the trimming by Mike Collingburn of Richmond, North Yorkshire.

She had her first real run to Oxford from West Yorkshire in April 2004 on the MGCC Y-Type Register Spring Run, and won the NTG Cup. In subsequent years she has regularly attended Register Spring and Autumn Runs. She has been back on the road about 16 years now and is a fairly practical car – especially for two passengers. We have toured Brittany – 1,400+ more or less trouble-free miles – the Loire Valley, and in 2019 the Isle of Man. A return to Ireland is long overdue!

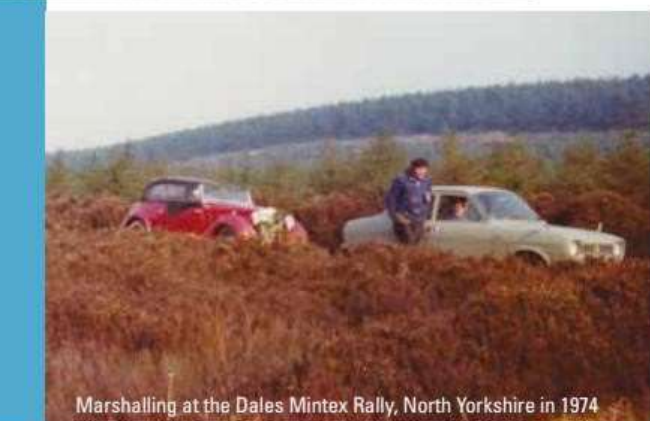
The Link to Triumph Roadster TS2

I had never heard of TS2 and certainly didn't know that Dr O'Hara had owned her until I was passed by some Irish TR owners in mid-Wales in 2012. TS2 originally had the registration number IR 6360. This subsequently became 773 EWO in the UK for some reason. (When in Ireland it seems to carry its original registration, but in the UK it carries 773 EWO.) They noted the similar Irish registration number of my car and made the connection through a website where I had entered a few details of IR 4304, including its first owner. In 2014 the two cars were lined up at the annual Triumph Register day in Harrogate. Unfortunately the Irish registration number plates were not available for an otherwise memorable day.

Mike Silk



Somewhere in Donegal, August 1972



Marshalling at the Dales Mintex Rally, North Yorkshire in 1974



MG YT and TS2 together at Harrogate

ADVENTURE IN A Y TYPE

When I was 19, I was at college in London (Leicester Square, in fact, but that's a whole lot of other stories). At the end of my first year, I decided it wasn't for me and moved back to my home town. Having a need for a car (the Morris Minor convertible I had as a schoolboy had dissolved in a heap of rust some time before) I searched the classified ads in the local paper. There I found an MG 'Y'. I had no idea what that might be but a friend's brother had a pile of bits in his garage which he was slowly putting back together, a sporty looking number with cycle mudguards that he called an MG P type.

I assumed the Y type would be something like this so I went to see it. What I found, of course, was not a low, sporty roadster but a small, cheeky-looking saloon car. It belonged to a youngish schoolteacher who was moving to New Zealand with his wife and young family. They obviously loved the car; I drove it and loved it too, there was something about it that made me smile. I bought it for £35.00. It was black and a total contrast to all the other cars on the road then, the Minis and Ford Anglias and Cortinas. The leather seats and the wooden interior trim gave it a distinct look and smell. The walnut dash and octagon control switches and dials gave it class. The steering wheel was adjustable, the windscreen opened (the dashboard also moved. It was loose so that pulling the choke pulled out the starter, something it took me some time to realise wasn't intentional). The Jackall system raised the car on all fours. It was like a fascinating new toy to me; my friends were amazed by it, girls seemed to like it. I drove it as an everyday car, I didn't think of it as a classic. Well, I didn't always treat it as an everyday car, time will forgive me the occasions when I drove down the town High Street with a friend standing on the passenger seat, saluting out of the open sun roof. Or when we screeched to a halt next to a bus queue and dragged a girl in through the back door after watching *The Untouchables* (we did know her). We were only young.

My girlfriend at the time had family who lived in Devon. During the Christmas holidays I arranged to stay there between Boxing Day and New Year. I set off in the Y with a change of clothes and a toothbrush, a few quid in my wallet and little else. I can't recall checking the oil or greasing the king pins or putting any air in the tyres. I had a full tank and it was only 240 miles. I can't remember the route I took but it wasn't on motorways, which didn't join up like they do now. Remember going through Frome and Devizes but not much else, apart from the fact that it was freezing cold and getting colder and snowier every mile I drove. Just before my destination just outside Barnstaple, I hit a patch of black ice while going down a steepish hill. The car turned a couple of circles before slamming to a halt against a high nearside kerbstone. After this the steering was a bit stiff, with a distinct swing to the left. Something had been bent but I decided to struggle on.

After about six hours driving, cold, hungry and tired, I arrived. My girlfriend had told me I could park on their driveway but the gates were locked. Before I could knock on the door she came out and got in beside me. Her mother, it seemed, had decided that I was no longer welcome and she would not allow me in the house. To explain: the time was 1969, I had shoulder length hair,

an afghan coat that had a tendency to smell of goat in warm weather, patched jeans and cowboy boots. She came from a highly respected Devon family and sometimes wore pearls and tweed skirts. We were very much in love, but ill-matched. Nothing we (or her father) could say would sway her mother. I said I would go to the nearest town (a seaside resort) and find a B&B. I drove off into the night, girlfriend waving me off beneath a streetlight flecked with snowflakes. I didn't find a B&B; they were all dark and shut up for the night. I slept in the car under a single thin blanket, awaking at first light to find my hair frozen to the glass of the side window. I had to cup my hands and huff onto my hair for a time before it thawed enough to let me move. I had no money; I'd spent what I had on petrol and expected to get more from the bank when it opened on Monday (no holes in the wall then) but I was hungry and freezing cold. I got out to stretch my legs; noticing that I had stopped beside a municipal park with an ornamental pond. People like to throw coins into such ponds, possibly confusing a shallow grey concrete pit with a romantic fountain in Rome; how or why I have no idea. In this pond there were a fair number of half-crowns, florins and shillings glinting among the pennies in the early morning light. Taking my boots and socks off, I braved the needle sharp cold of the water and soon had a couple of handfuls of silver. I dried myself on the blanket, stuck my numb fingers under my armpits and went into the first open greasy spoon I found. I've eaten many full breakfasts with tea and two slices since then, but none have compared with that one. The bacon and fried bread warmed me from within and grasping the pint mug of hot tea warmed my hands from the outside.

My experience soured our relationship, though it wasn't her fault. Her mother would never have let it work. I did stay in a B&B for a few days; the Y went into a local garage for some TLC to the front suspension and a new set of points and plugs. The journey back was warmer and uneventful.

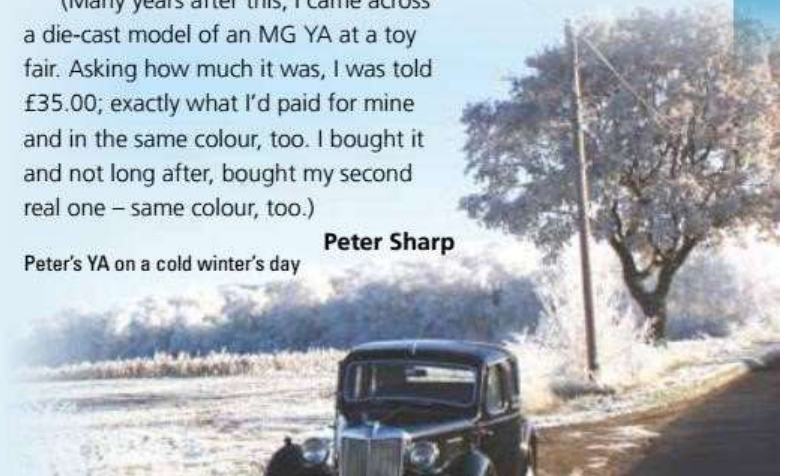
The car developed a few serious faults over the next few months which, when I went to a new place at university, I didn't have the facilities or money to put right. It eventually went to someone who was rebuilding a Y Type, as a donor car.

Do I remember the registration or the chassis number? Do I have a log book or any photographs? No, I don't. Do I remember it fondly as the source of experiences, fun and memories? Yes, I do, and that's what owning cars is all about; isn't it?

(Many years after this, I came across a die-cast model of an MG YA at a toy fair. Asking how much it was, I was told £35.00; exactly what I'd paid for mine and in the same colour, too. I bought it and not long after, bought my second real one – same colour, too.)

Peter Sharp

Peter's YA on a cold winter's day





Y TYPES IN ART

A couple of examples of Ys in art. Peter Vielvoye's YT is a lovely example and painted by his sister. Little Gem is a YB that was left to the Car Club by a long-term member who died in 2009, maintained by the Y Register through the care and attention of Neil Cairns. It was finally auctioned in 2016 at MGLive! and acquired by Paul and Maggie Grafham, both Y Register Committee Members. The painting was commissioned by the Register and hangs in Kimber House. The artist is Kevin Parrish, who is well known for his excellent railway images.

PETER VIELVOYE'S YT

An example of the rarest post-war MG. I have owned her since 2001 and over the years have restored, repaired and improved her lovingly. This watercolour picture was painted by my sister Sally Ann Mancell for my 70th birthday. Sally was a Spode/Royal Dalton designer and now practises as a freelance



THE NAMING OF LITTLE GEM

Artist Kevin Parrish. <http://www.kevinparrish.co.uk>

In 2009 MG YB MDF 630 was bequeathed to the MGCC and for seven years she was used to promote Club activities. When she first arrived at Kimber House Y Register members paid her a visit. From left to right: Suzie Arnell, Peter Arnell, Jack Murray, Ted Gardner and Jerry Birkbeck. Suzie remarked "She's a Little Gem" and the name stuck. After Little Gem was sold, the Club commissioned this oil painting to commemorate her. She is now owned by Paul and Maggie Grafham's grandson... who is all of ten years old!

A USEFUL MG TOOL

The one problem I have with my MG YB is the fact that the choke will not lock on. I was finding it inconvenient holding it out while pulling the starter and getting the engine warmed up/the oil pressure to the right level, so I looked around for a solution.

I discovered a specialist firm making 'Choke Assistance Devices'. These are customised for different makes and marques of vehicles and are available to order. I have attached a photograph of mine; it retails at £22.50 (inc. VAT). Perhaps the Y Register shop could stock them?



Peter Sharp

YOUR REGISTER NEEDS YOU!

As you are all aware, the Register is once more allowed to sell its Regalia. These are parts that are not manufactured by any mainstream supplier. However, Mike and Sue Silk, who have been running the Shop for well over a decade and a half and have been primarily responsible

for finding appropriate and trustworthy individuals and organisations to recreate some parts, are looking to retire from the post.

Hence we need someone to take over the reins and to continue to distribute the spares and seek potential suppliers.

It is a low-level commitment and the service is run online.

Have a look at the range we offer on our Register website www.mgccyregistershop.co.uk.

If you are interested then please contact Mike – mikesue4304@gmail.com