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NEWSLETTER



WELCOME TO THE Y TYPE NEWSLETTER



Y Types line up for the track parade, MGLive!

By the time you read this we will be approaching the end of 2022, the 75th Anniversary year of the MG 1 1/4 Litre saloon, later to become the Y Type. We have had events throughout the year to celebrate the anniversary. I'd like a wander down memory lane with them.

Our first was our usual late Christmas lunch, held in January so it's outside of the rush; a pleasant meal at the White Hart in Nettlebed. It was great to see Jerry Birkbeck in attendance. Unfortunately this was the last time most of us would see him. His death in February at the age of 75 was a major and very sad



Waiting to board the ferry at Poole

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event in the MG world and in the Y Type world in particular. I wrote about his funeral at the time and it is still one of the biggest congregations I have ever seen; standing room only and dozens outside in the rain

In May we had our first Spring Run for two years (do you find it hard to remember when exactly things occurred over the last two years? It's as if Covid carved a hole in life) Again, we had an excellent dinner at Middle Weston House in Oxfordshire, followed by a run to the Motor Museum at Gaydon, starting in a rainstorm. It also marked the launch of our brochure/ booklet (I'm never sure which is which) for the anniversary. We decided that it would be better to highlight people who have been significant in promoting and supporting the Y Type over the years, so we did. It has been distributed all over the world and is still available. Thank you to Peter Vielvoye and his daughter for the hard work in getting it so professionally produced. Mention must be also made of Neil Cairn's book on the history of the MG 1 1/4 litre Sports Saloon, an excellent account that manages to be historically accurate, technically detailed and entertaining at the same time

In June we had a 75th Anniversary stand at MGLive! and were lucky enough to do a couple of laps of Silverstone circuit. We were forbidden from overtaking or speeding though, which was a disappointment.

I wrote about our Jersey Trip last month. It was very enjoyable, as usual because of the good company and fun; driving the cars is almost incidental. In the Tunnels Museum there were many photographs taken at the time of the Nazi invasion. One interesting one was of a soldier sitting on the bonnet of a VA, the only time I can remember seeing a Nazi on an MG Saloon. The crossings both ways were trouble free and only took four hours from Poole. On our return all six Y Saloons were parked together (and chocked) in a small nook on the car deck. The ferry loaders made sure we could all drive off together. Seeing six Ys driving off



German Soldier on MG VA Saloon

the ferry in line astern was a thrilling site, it's a pity no one took a photo. We are looking for another island to visit in 2024. After the small island of Jersey, we are looking westwards to a much bigger one; watch this space.

The Spring Run next year was planned for May 6 but that date has been taken by someone else. It is now on the weekend of May 13-14 2023 in South Gloucestershire; details to come soon.



Spring Run cars at Gaydon Motor Museum

DENNIS DOUBTFIRE AND Y TYPE MEMORABILIA

We've mentioned Dennis Doubtfire in these pages before. He was a founder member of the present Y Register. In fact, he and his friend Colin Rea founded this Y Type Register together and tossed a coin to see who would become the first Chairman. Peter Vielvoye visited Dennis recently and this is his account of the visit.

By the time you read this I will have opened my first Christmas card and I am pretty sure it will read, 'From Dennis and Babs, your friends in Somerset'; well, it has done for the past 15 years as Dennis is always first off the mark with his cards. You may remember from reading our 75th Anniversary Brochure, Dennis Doubtfire was a founder member of the present Y Register. He was the driving force behind the early success of the Register, and as such was rewarded with the Nuffield Gold Cup. He continued to be involved until he had to give up driving due to deteriorating health.

A couple of weeks ago Dennis phoned me to say that, although he was well enough at the present time, he was concerned that as he is now 92, he did not want all the MG and Y Register memorabilia that he had collected over years to be lost, or possibly thrown away, should he have a sudden untimely demise. He said he had an extensive collection

of books mainly on MGs but also some on classic cars and motorbikes, framed pictures, bound copies of magazines and quite a few other odds and ends. He wanted it to go to the Y Register who he was sure would find a good home for it and probably make a few pounds to add to the funds. Could someone come and collect it, he asked? Living in Gloucester I was the closest to him, so I had found myself another task to do.

I had a pleasant drive down to Somerset and Dennis was waiting to welcome me outside his charming farmhouse cottage. He took me into a back room where he had sorted it all into several black sacks. Rather taken aback by the quantity, my immediate thought was: where was I going to store it all and what was my wife Val was going to say when I got it all back home! After running me through what was there, we loaded it into my SUV and completely filled the back. We then went back inside for a coffee and a chat. Dennis talked about the early days, and I filled him in with what had been happening in the Y Reg in recent years and specifically about the Y visit to Jersey that I had just returned from. Not being online with a computer, Dennis only had the information he had gleaned from the Y Reg *Safety Fast!* notes.

It soon became apparent from our chat

that in the early days, events were very well attended with a regular 20 or 30 Ys turning up. The reason, we surmised, was most likely down to the age of the owners. Back in the 1990s the average age must have been in the late 50s and 60s but now, as we know, we tend to be in our 70s and early 80s. I could say the cars are also older but I am pretty sure they have kept their youthful looks better than we have, and are certainly still running just as smoothly. We talked about why people own Ys and how many present owners have bought them because we either owned one ourselves back in the day, or a family member owned one and we have nostalgic memories of a Y. Today's potential classic owners look back and crave a Ford Escort RS or a Golf GTI. The market for our cars is much reduced to the enlightened few, who see a pretty post-war car, with pre-war looks and post-war technology. Our interesting chat had to end as I had to get back to Gloucester to pick up my granddaughter from school, so I thanked Dennis and assured him we would find good homes for the many items in his collection.

You may have already seen some of Dennis's collection on sale, but if not, look out for it on our website, Facebook page or eBay. Anything still remaining will be at the Spring Run and MGLive!



Some of Dennis Doubtfire memorabilia