TREGISTER

Totally T-Type

ISSUE 28 JULY 2008

TD 8923, Frank Filangeri's USA TD racer

www.tregister.org

Tel: 01279 876 976
Fax: 01279 876 428
info@peteredney.co.uk

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THE EDITOR

Welcome to the July Issue! Silverstone MG International has come and gone for another year. I don't know what those of you who attended thought, but I reckon that the event had more of a 'buzz' about it this year. I suppose the magnificent displays of K3s, MGA Twin Cams and L-Types helped and there was also a better focus and more to do with the introduction of the Arena. From my perspective the highlight was in meeting so many of you at the Register stand and it was very good to 'put a face' to several of you who were but names before. My thanks also to the gentleman from the US who always gives me £10 towards TTT costs whenever he sees me!

I think I am correct in saying that the MG Car Club's 3 year (or was it 5?) contract with Silverstone Circuits, who manage the commercial interests of the 700 acre site on behalf of its owner, the British Racing Drivers' Club (BRDC), expires after the 2009 International Weekend. If the MG Car Club decides to stay at Silverstone post 2009 (I personally hope it does) at least we will not have to suffer the indignity of having to wait upon Mr Ecclestone to make his mind up over the date of the British Grand Prix before we can announce the date of our Silverstone International Weekend. Indeed, if there was ever a good reason for us not going to Donington Park this is it!

"Donington Park" do I hear you say? Well yes! At the time of writing this editorial (13th July) it has just been announced that Donington Park in Leicestershire will host the British Grand Prix in 2010. Whether it is going to be possible to lengthen and widen the track, put in place some run-off areas and provide all the infrastructure improvements at Donington in such a relatively short period of time is debatable. Apart from the time factor there is also the thorny issue of costs. Here in the UK, we always seem to massively underestimate the cost of large projects. We shall see!

What have Chrysler in the USA and the former MG Rover Group got in common? ……*(continued on page 4)*

Well, from my reading of a recent report in *The Financial Times* cleverly entitled “Can Chrysler dodge a crisis?” a partner could be needed if the company, now under the control of Cerberus Capital Management, is to survive the massive downturn in the automotive industry.

In the case of MG Rover, there were attempts to find a partner but it seems that all were shunned – perhaps those who were being courted did not like what they saw! In the case of Chrysler the approach appears to be somewhat different in that Bob Nardelli, Chairman, is reported as saying “We’re not looking for a wedding partner, just dating – and it’s nice being single”.

Yet, strategic alliances abound the world over. A seemingly unlikely one was the tie up between Nissan and Renault. More recently it is reported that Fiat and BMW are considering a wide-ranging co-operation that could entail building common platforms, sharing engines and helping the Alfa Romeo marque into the US. The world is indeed shrinking!

The difficulties faced by the Automotive Industry can be laid fairly and squarely at the door of the oil price. These difficulties are being felt more acutely by manufacturers of “gas guzzlers” which have gone out of fashion big time. There is little comfort in forecasts of future oil prices. If you look at it from the oil producers’ point of view, if one is sitting on a finite supply of “liquid gold” and demand is set to go on progressively rising, what is the point of selling more oil today when one can sell for a higher price tomorrow?

The exception to the problems faced by the manufacturers of “gas guzzlers” is of course the top end of the luxury car market. I see from reports that both Bentley and Rolls Royce are confident of riding out the downturn. Who would argue with that when some of their customers have enough small change in their pockets to buy the entire production run for several years ahead?

Well that’s enough ‘doom and gloom’ from the world according to John James! However, every cloud has a silver lining and I was heartened by a recent report which focussed on the skills and quality control of UK engineering. We may have lost the Jaguar and Range Rover brands to Tata (referred to in the Indian press as reverse colonialism!) but we are biting back. The report majored on competitiveness and quality and it seems from several of the examples given that the common perception that parts made in China are far cheaper is not necessarily true. Transport costs obviously come into the price equation and then there are the important issues of quality and turnaround time. One particular example given was that of a large batch of castings made in the Far East which had to be scrapped since all but a handful did not meet quality controls.

Well, that’s about it until Issue 29! **JOHN JAMES**

Cover Photograph – TD8923

Superb photo taken by Ade Ketchum - 2006 Zippo Vintage Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, USA. TD8923 'duffing up' the opposition.

Frank Filangeri's TD was first raced in the 1950s. The car retired from racing by the 1960s and was used as a road car until purchased by the previous owner to Frank (Bob Wertley – see next paragraph) in the early 1980s when it resumed its racing career. Frank has been racing TD8923 on the Vintage Race circuit on the east coast of the US since 2001 as a member of the VSCCA (Vintage Sports Car Club of America) and VRG (Vintage Racer Group). The car has seen action at Limerock, Pocono, Virginia International Raceway, New Hampshire International Speedway, Beaver Run and most recently Watkins Glen, participating in 4-6 events per year. Most significant race to date was winning the "T" Cup at Watkins Glen in 2005 as the first T car to cross the finish line in the annual all MG Collier Cup Race. The car always places well among the T cars it faces and quite often, due to excellent handling and brakes, will outperform MGAs, Austin Healeys, Triumphs and Morgans.

Readers might like to know how Frank became interested in the racing scene, leading to his becoming a competitor – here's his story……

"I have owned at least one British car since 1969 starting with a '59 TR3, sold to buy a '66 Austin Healey 3000, then a '61 Jag XKE roadster to go with it and a bit later a Jensen Interceptor. I have always been interested in racing, particularly vintage sports cars. Around 1993, a shop that

specialized in vintage race car prep moved into a space adjacent to where I work. I began to frequent the shop, getting to know the owner and his customers. One customer, Bob Wertley, was campaigning two MGAs, a TD and an MGA based Byers special at the time. Along about 1999 he encouraged and sponsored me to join the VSCCA vintage race organization. Sometime later he began to inquire as to when was I going to take the driving school and get involved in racing. As I did not have a race car at the time, I saw no way of getting this accomplished. Bob however, had different ideas. He insisted on me making arrangements to take the school at Limerock, towing the MG to the track in his trailer and acting as pit crew and coach for the weekend so I could get my license. I at first refused, fearing the potential damage to someone else's car but he persisted. In the spring of 2000 I was at Limerock, in the TD, and successfully completed the school.

They couldn't wipe the smile off my face for weeks afterwards!

About six months later Bob decided to take the next step up the ladder, sell all the MGs and get into a Lotus 23. Knowing how much I enjoyed the weekend in the TD he offered it me before putting it on the open market. I thought it over and decided it was now or never, sold the Healey (it eventually found its way back to England) to buy the TD and a trailer and the rest is history.

I am forever grateful to Bob for his encouragement and generosity. The wonderful people I have met racing and the great events I have been able to participate in are due to his gentle prodding. I try to return that in part by encouraging spectators at these events, especially children, to sit in the car, take photos, ask questions and if possible even take them for a short ride.

By doing this, I hope to encourage the next generation to become the future caretakers of these wonderful machines".

Ed's Note: As a postscript to his latest e-mail to me Frank wrote the following: "Next race coming up in less than two weeks! Can't wait....."

‘T’REGISTER NEWS (Compiled by John James)

PAST EVENT Silverstone has been given a brief mention in the editorial. A full report is in July’s “Safety Fast!” which UK readers will have received on Wednesday 2nd July. However, you might be interested in a couple of ‘shots’ – one personality photo and one of some of the XPAG Specials - taken by the camera of Keith Doherty.

‘Would you buy a used car from this fine body of men?’ From left to right, Alex Quattlebaum, ‘T’ Racer (Alex races the highly successful Leco MG); Mike Lugg, ‘T’ Register President; Dennis Barker, former ‘T’ Register Chairman; Stewart Penfound, TA/B/C and Specials Registrar; Keith Hodder, organiser of the XPAG Specials display for more years than he would care to admit.

Some of the XPAG Specials lined up in the Arena at Silverstone

The 'T' Party (Sunday, 6th July '08) As I type this section of the magazine (towards the end of June) the 'T' Party is a future event, but will, of course be a past event by the time you receive TTT. We'll include a brief event report in September's TTT.

The Autumn Weekend (7/8/9 September 08) Organiser, Chris Tinker reports that the Hotel Elizabeth Copdock is now fully booked. Whilst we have over 50 cars, we can still take a few more, but entrants will need to find their own accommodation. A nearby hotel is The Belstead Brook Manor Hotel www.swallow-hotels.com/hotels/belstead-brook-hotel If you decide to book in at this hotel, please advise Chris Tinker so that he can keep track of numbers. Alternatively, you might like to take a chance with a cancellation at the Hotel Elizabeth Copdock (it is not unknown for there to be one or two cancellations prior to the event). If so, please advise Chris Tinker so that he can slot you in, in the event of a cancellation. Chris can be contacted on 07817 429243 or e-mail c.tinker(at)uwclub.net

The Practical Skills Workshop (PSW) – Sunday 12th October 08)
Please note that the event has been put back by one day (it was originally scheduled for Saturday 11th October). The day commences at around 9.30am and morning and afternoon refreshments and a good buffet lunch will be provided by our 'in house' caterers. We have pegged the admission fee at £40 and numbers are strictly limited to 36 persons. Please contact Graham Brown straight away as demand normally exceeds supply for the PSW. Graham's contact details are:

Tel:01234/358729 or e-mail: Graham@isisbedford62.freeserve.co.uk

The event venue is the premises of Peter Edney Classic and Sports Cars, Unit 2 Woodside, High Easter Road, Leaden Roding, DUNMOW, Essex CM6 1QQ. Those of you who receive Peter's Newsletters will know that a number of improvements have been carried out at his premises recently with the Bodywork facility having been brought in on site and also an improved Parts Department provided, enabling customers to choose the parts they wish to purchase. Here's what Peter says about the arrangements for this year's PSW:

"This year's open day will allow T-Type enthusiasts to learn the basics of looking after their T-Type, including tuning their carbs and servicing their brakes. The day will also give you the opportunity to watch an XPAG engine being fully rebuilt and to discuss all the modifications which are carried out on our XPAG engine rebuilds."

Whilst the above topics, particularly the engine rebuild, form the core items for the day, we are hopefully flexible enough (as long as you give us sufficient notice), to cover that part of a rebuild which has always puzzled you and about which you would like the advice of the experts.

‘Rebuild’ 2009 – 14th or 15th March, 2009 (St Neots)

Yes, it’s some way off, but it’s frightening how the months go by! Bill Silcock is organising next year’s event and would welcome any suggestions for topics to be covered. Tel: 01525 750468 or bill.silcock1@ntlworld.com

Scottish Borders Tour 17/18/19 August 2009

Even further in the distance is this mid-week tour, which is proving to be extremely popular and well supported. Full details have been provided in the last few Issues of TTT. We have almost filled the hotel as, at the time of writing, there are only three double rooms and four singles remaining. Just to recap, the hotel is The Ednam House Hotel, Bridge Street, KELSO, Roxburghshire. The website is www.ednamhouse.com

The organisers are John and Claudette Bloomfield and they can be contacted on either 01992 576357 or 01890 882445, – if you don’t get a reply on one of the numbers, you should get a reply on the other. The cost of this event is estimated to be £550; this is for two persons for three nights and includes the entrance fee. An application form is included on the ‘T’ Register website under ‘News’ items or can be obtained by phoning (as above).

John and Claudette have received a number of applications from members wishing to join the tour, who either live in the area or intend to stay with friends nearby. John will be issuing an invitation early in 2009 to others who wish to join the tour and who are not staying at The Ednam House Hotel.

The Autumn Tour 2009 (Provisionally 11/12/13 September 2009)

Yes, a long way off, but such is the take up for our Autumn Tour Weekend that there are very few hotels capable of accommodating us. A provisional booking has been made at The Moorland Links Hotel. This hotel is situated near Yelverton on the A386 Plymouth to Tavistock road. Being in West Devon, it is ideally situated for a day’s touring in Cornwall and another in Devon.

The hotel’s website is www.moorlandlinkshotel.co.uk

The date remains provisional for the present.

The Autumn Tour 2010

For 2010, suggestions have been forthcoming for both Rutland and Mid Wales.

T-Types to the Ardennes

In the usual adventurous spirit which exemplifies MG Car Club members, a group of hardy 'T-Typers' toured Normandy in May 2007, several taking their MG abroad for the first time. Such was the success of this trip (despite somewhat 'iffy' weather) that a pair of willing volunteers, Bill and Sally Silcock, were given the task of organising a similar weekend in the Ardennes on the French/Belgian border in May 2008.

Bill and Sally discovered some delightful routes in this lovely area, renowned for its rivers and forested hills, traversed by sinuous roads with Alpine-type hairpin bends. And they even managed to replicate the 2007 weather!

Participants came from all over Britain, some of whom took two days to reach their destination at the Castel les Sorbiers hotel *(see photo below)* on the Meuse river, near the little village of Heer in Belgium. The prize, however, must surely go to Dughall and Maureen Leask from Aberdeen who drove more than 100 miles to the Scottish port of Rosyth in order to catch a ferry to Zeebrugge. They then drove their TF all the way through Belgium to Heer!

A small group of us who live in the South-East were able to make the journey in one day and left home before dawn to cover the 180-odd miles from Calais to Heer, arriving in time to enjoy an aperitif at the hotel before dinner. Although dull, the rain held off and it was possible to make the journey with the hood down all the way.

One of our group, 'Jeff' Jeffree, had had to leave his TF with Peter Edney to try to cure a persistent oil leak following a complete engine rebuild and was using his every-day car for the trip - which was to prove fortuitous for another crew. Shortly after arrival at the hotel, 'Jeff' was just settling down to his preferred tipple of a large gin and 'It' when Bill Silcock asked if he would go to pick up Bob and Susan Marshall whose TF had terminally broken down 'a few miles away' and needed transport to the hotel. As 'Jeff's' Jaguar was the only four-

seater vehicle available, he was the obvious candidate for this mission of mercy and so he duly set off with Geoff Matthews as his navigator since the latter knew precisely where the Marshalls were stranded. The 'few miles' proved to be some 40/50 miles away and the rescue car with the stranded members on board eventually arrived at the hotel well after 9 pm, where a cold collation had been prepared for their delayed dinner.

The Tour proper started on the Saturday under lowering skies. Although many set off with the hood down, the rain soon started and hoods had to be hastily raised. For the morning run, participants were given the choice of a long or a short route, both of which converged on the delightful little town of La Roche en Ardenne.

A visit to the extensive WW2 museum, which mainly covered the famous Battle of the Bulge, was a must before partaking of a light lunch and setting off on the afternoon section. This included optional visits to some old iron furnaces and to a brewery but we had not gone far before the heavens opened and we all were driving through torrential downpours. A petrol station near the end of the section was visited by many T Types – as much to shelter under the canopy from the rain as to top up with fuel. It's amazing how long one can make the simple task of filling a petrol tank last!

Sunday dawned - another gloomy day but at least not as wet as the previous one. A longish morning run of 70 miles brought us to Han sur Lesse where we visited the famous grotto and met up with a few members of the Luxembourg MGCC. The grotto is a fascinating place, with enormous caverns, artfully lit and fully explained by our English-speaking guide. The exit from the grotto is made by boat, greeted as one emerges into daylight by the firing of a cannon to ward off evil spirits. Despite this, all the T Type crews emerged unscathed so perhaps there was nothing evil about their spirits!

As we tumbled from our beds and parted the curtains on Monday morning we were relieved to see that we had a fine day at last! cloudy, but bright, with the sun trying to break through. Once again we had the choice of two routes – a long one (108 miles) or a shorter one (99 miles). This was probably the best day as, apart from the improved weather, the road book took us around a route

with plenty of hairpin bends, culminating in spectacular views over the surrounding rivers and forests.

Back at the hotel, a gala dinner awaited us and the usual MG conviviality was much in evidence.

Tuesday proved to be an even better day with wall-to-wall sunshine to accompany our journey home. Again, some were taking two days over the journey but we had a Eurotunnel booking for that evening. Our return trip proved uneventful, apart from a couple of problems with road closures and the dreaded 'Déviations'. Others, we gather, were less fortunate and there was more than one breakdown during the event or on the run home, mostly of an electrical nature. Bill Silcock is threatening everyone with a three-line whip for the "Electrical Systems and Roadside Diagnostics" section at next year's 'Rebuild' event! These problems seemed to have aided the Belgian economy somewhat as at least three battery chargers were purchased in that country!

As it happened, our little group arrived at the Eurotunnel terminal with two hours in hand and managed to get an immediate crossing. This proved to be very fortunate as, unbeknown to us, the French fishermen were launching a blockade of the Channel ports and, although not directly affecting the Tunnel, many cars were later diverted on to this form of crossing.

All in all, we had a very enjoyable trip and Bill and Sally are to be congratulated on organizing such a successful event. We are all eagerly awaiting to hear whether we shall be visiting Europe again in 2009. **Roy Ingleton**

Ed's Note: There are some more photos of the trip on the MG Motorist's Group website www.mgmg.lu (from which the first and the last two photos in this article have been taken, with thanks). Where is it next year – Brittany?

"If All Else Fails, Try Everything!"

This is (yet another?) Tale of the Trials, Traumas and Tribulations of Trying to Treat a Troublesome and Temperamental T-Type with Tiresome Tracheotomic(!) Tendencies; i.e. to overcome that well-known and documented ailment of many T-Type MGs (particularly TDs, it seems!), which is the random and unexplained, (and usually very inconvenient!) stalling or "expiring" of the engine at unpredictable moments, usually when coming to a halt in traffic, or at junctions, or traffic lights or other similar impediments to steady, forward progress.

It seems that this is not an uncommon situation these days, and (allegedly?) related to the use of unleaded petrol, even in those T-Types which have been "converted" to run on such elixir. Other factors seem to be overheating of the dear old XPAG engine (possibly caused by the "hotter" burning unleaded fuel?), and/or failures in the ignition department – also possibly due to overheating. There have been many articles and reports, in e.g. TTT, and similar MG related publications, describing both the symptoms of, and possible solutions to, this frustrating, irritating, and sometimes downright b****y annoying condition ! So now you are getting mine!

Very soon after I acquired CSV 875 ("MaTilDa") some 2½ years ago, I found myself stranded out in the countryside, about 30 miles from home, with an engine that had quietly petered out, and was refusing to restart. It did eventually restart after about a 25 minutes cooling down period - a common pattern, it emerged subsequently, which repeated itself on a number of occasions over the following couple of years.

Naturally, when I returned home after that first such occasion, I embarked on a frenzy of changing all the relevant ignition parts; coil, plugs, points, condenser and ignition leads etc. Carbs were then stripped, cleaned, re-bushed, overhauled (all by Burlens, so should have been alright) and reset and tuned – a number of times! But as the weather warmed up in the summer time I was still getting fairly frequent "breakdowns" on all but the shortest journeys. None of these incidents actually caused me to have to abandon the vehicle, or have it trailered home by the road rescue services, but it did extend the journey times somewhat as various "cooling off breaks" were involuntarily taken!

So, what next? More ignition component changes were made, but with no apparent difference. (It didn't seem, in retrospect, that "electrics" was the problem , but I had by then read many of the articles in TTT where people were suffering e.g. regular condenser or rotor failures etc – "always carry a spare!" - and assumed this might cure things. No such luck!)

Next move - investigate all the possible overheating situations, which could be leading to possible fuel vaporisation etc. Or was it poor fuel supply? So, changed the fuel pump (a couple of times!); cleared through all the fuel lines (but they didn't appear to be restricted in any way), and (later) double insulated the fuel lines from pump to carb., and between the carbs. (Details on this later,

if anyone wants to copy my approach). I had, of course, read elsewhere that insulating the fuel lines against excessive heat was desirable on many older vehicles now running on unleaded fuel. But that didn't seem to improve things either.

The other oddity was that I didn't appear to be overheating, even on hot summer days. The temperature rarely went above 80˚C on the gauge (i.e. in the header tank - could be a bit hotter in the cylinder head?) and ran steadily at about 70˚C. So, was the gauge faulty? Not according to a very accurate digital (cooking!) thermometer, which I used to calibrate the gauge. And I have never boiled, or lost any significant amount of water on long runs.

So next, I tackled the possibility of overheating in the carb float chambers – which are, of course, rather close to the exhaust manifold on the standard XPAG layout. (Pity someone hadn't invented a cross-flow head for XPAG in those days! Most Triple-M models had them. That Lord Nuffield, and his "standard" Morris and Wolseley bits, has a lot to answer for!)

A heat shield and insulating spacer blocks at the inlet manifold were next on the "modification" agenda. Most other TD owners I talked to had installed these, so it ought to be the answer? A little later, the exhaust downpipe, as far as the silencer box, was wrapped in insulating woven tape of the heat resisting variety; again something which I had seen on various other vehicles. But all that lot still didn't cause the "problem" to go away!

By now I am 18 months on, and still apparently no closer to cracking the problem. "Try an electric fan" was the advice I got from various TD owners, especially when I went to the Octagon Club "Wings Run" to Bletchley Park in early summer 2007. Good idea! So a Pacet fan was duly obtained and fitted. Didn't seem to have much effect on engine temperature but did bring it down a bit if the engine had been idling, stationary, or pulling hard up hills etc. But it seems to need a lot of current (well, it's a motor, isn't it) and the old standard dynamo on a T-Type struggles to keep up with demand with the fan on together with any other auxiliaries. (Guess an alternator conversion is required next!)

I was also a bit worried that I had to switch on the fan (I only fitted the manual switch type, not the thermostatic) whenever the vehicle stopped with the engine running. So, it would be a bit less worrying, I thought if there was still some form of mechanical fan working in tandem with the electric option. But to fit said electric fan behind the radiator (a "pull" fan, which seems to be the only position for it on a TD), required the standard 4 blade mechanical fan to be removed, together with the extension nosepiece to which they are bolted.

Now, how to also fit a mechanical fan in this revised set up? What I hit upon is that the fan blades from the early Midget/Sprite "A" series engines are a smaller overall blade diameter than, but with almost identical fixing bolt hole locations to the TD fan. (About 9" diameter versus about 12.5" for the T-fan) So, a little enlargement of the fixing holes and the central boss hole enabled the Spridget fan blades to be located on the same water pump flange (without the spacer)

and not hit the thermostat housing above it. Bingo! A cheap, simple solution to a combined mechanical /electric cooling fan system. So far, just one pair of blades has proved sufficient, but the second pair could be added if we still get too hot on stationary idle. (There are some pictures of this below). But maybe I don't need the electric fan now? Only time will tell!

By now it was nearly midsummer 2007 (but who would have thought it, with all that rain!) but "the gremlins" had still not gone away! We (nearly!) made the Regency Run to Brighton, on perhaps the wettest day in May, but expired as we turned onto Madeira Drive, just 200 yards from the finish. And then in June we went to the Silverstone MG International – again in very wet conditions. Made it there without actually breaking down, but I had a lot of misfiring, and "rough running" on the way. So, was it after all, damp electrics?

Had some useful conversations with Peter Edney and his Team at Silverstone. His experts kindly walked over to the T-Type car park and ran up my motor and "diagnosed" it. Basically (from cold start, of course) they deemed it was OK. But someone (Chris?) observed that there was still one of those Spark Boosters things in the main HT lead (I had inherited that, and had never replaced it!), and that they were occasionally subject to breakdown. So that got removed there and then! Now it may have been psychological, but "Matilda" got all the way home to Surrey, in very wet conditions, without faltering!! Were we on to something here? But we also fitted a new Distributor Cap, together with rotor arm and condenser, soon afterwards "just to be on the safe side". (Does this sound a bit like the onset of paranoia? - Probably!)

The "Edney Boys" also advised that, when "tuning" XPAGs, especially in TDs, they often removed the (unique to TD, and Y-Type) Oil Bath Air Filter, which sits right above the engine, in the hottest part of the under bonnet area, and hence was inhaling hot air, possibly affecting the mixture. So, we'll have that off as well, I decided! But what to fit instead? Now the factory had fitted pancake air filters to the TF, but that was with the 1½ " SUs. I planned to stick with my (refurbished) 1¼" H2s. After searching around, I found (at Moss) a pair of after-market Pancake type Air Filters, again designed for the original Spridget, and suitable for 1¼" SUs. Easy to fit, and with a bit of breather tubing and copper 15 mm plumbing componentry, adapted to the XPAG. The only fitting

'mod' that had to made was dropping the O/S radiator stay rod by about 35mm with the aid of an extended bolt (see photo immediately below), which enabled it to clear the front carb filter. The pancake filters are also shown further below (the MG badges were my own addition!)

This latest 'mod' seemed to make some noticeable difference, and since that time (August 2007), I haven't actually had any further "stalling" – but then again, I haven't done any long runs, and the weather has been getting cooler.

And although it didn't relate (apparently) to the "stalling" problem, I also subsequently overhauled the valve gear, rockers, cam followers, push rods etc. as part of my usual "if it ain't broke, then fix it anyway" maintenance programme! (There is another tale to be told here, but on some other occasion!). This certainly seemed to add a degree of quietness and smoothness to the running of the engine, and, with (yet another!) re-tune of the carbs, we now seem to be running quite well and "flatulence –free"!

But does this mean that I may I have finally cracked the problem? Hard to tell. It's middle of winter now, quite cold, and on the few runs I have done, there wasn't much chance to get "overheated". Presumably, the engine likes cooler air at the intake manifold, so the pancake filters may have helped. But is it merely due to the current weather conditions? I guess I'll have to wait until next summer's heat wave (if we are allowed these any more in an "energy conservation" green world!) to judge if any of the above has been totally successful!

If any TD owner who has been through similar troubles and traumas has any further ideas on what else I should/could try, then I'd be pleased to hear from them. As someone in a similar earlier article remarked, "I've tried all these things, but I don't really know which of them, or which combination, has succeeded". I know exactly how he feels!

Perhaps this is all old hat to experienced T-Typers and I am merely teaching my (now long departed!) grandmother to ingest eggs in a rather messy fashion. If so, I'll move on and produce my version of how I have modified the rear lighting systems on the TD. (Well, almost everybody has published their own different solution to that!). Or rather, if I make it to next summer's Silverstone International , then I'll report back on whether I am still suffering from the elusive, asthmatic condition – "MaTilDa" that is, not me!

Alan Wakefield
Surrey, Dec.2007

PS. To heat insulate the fuel pipes, I first clad them with that black plastic tubular cable-conduit material obtainable from any accessories shop. That was then wrapped with self adhesive-aluminium foil tape, again obtainable at any DIY. What I can't really tell is whether there is any benefit from this; but since a lot of the MG racers community seem to lag their fuel lines, then it probably isn't actually doing any harm!

Ed's Note: I'm afraid that I 'sat on' this article for too long, but there was method in my madness as Alan has now done a follow up piece, having successfully made it to Silverstone 2008 and back. Here's his update:

"Matilda Waltzes On"

Back in December of 2007, I had sent a long, detailed, and probably rather TeDious (never mind; he's obviously losing the plot these days!!) article to TTT on the trials and tribulations of trying to sort out the mysterious, and somewhat inexplicable "stalling" problems I was experiencing with my TD. (Seems that others had experienced this also, at various times). As that article showed, "If All Else Fails, Try (Fixing) Everything"!, which I certainly did!

So, has it cured Matilda's respiratory problems (for that is what it appeared to be?) **Answer:** I think so; apart from a couple of lapses. But let's start on New Year's Day 2008; a day when local classic car enthusiasts gather at Brooklands Museum, and subsequently at another nearby Surrey hostelry, to celebrate in the usual manner, and give their vehicles an airing during the winter hibernation period. All was fine with Matilda, but since it was only a short run, and the weather was cold, it wasn't enough to test whether "M" was still getting "hot and bothered".

Next excuse for a run was at end of January, when I went to Horsham in Sussex to help fellow MG Enthusiast extraordinaire, Allan Scott, sort out his TD Steering Rack (another saga here, coming soon!). Again, OK, but still cold weather. No runs in February, while the TD had her rear axle ratio upgraded, and, as of course you do(!), the whole of the rear suspension, braking system. and instrument panel electrics etc., rebuilt. As I have said before, if it ain't broke, fix it anyway!

"Beware the Ides of March" they said, (or at least I think that is 13th?). Had been to Farnham (a mere 25 miles) to collect some tickets from a friend (for the England v Ireland rugby international at Twickenham, if you must know!), and

was within a mile of home on the return leg, when…….! Everything died! But this time it was electrical, since nothing at all in the ignition circuits was operating – which leaves one well stranded. Towed home by the long-suffering "I told you to leave things alone", spouse and discovered that the very recently fitted, new " replica Lucas PLC 6 " Ignition Switch assembly had packed up internally. (And we let the Chinese buy our precious MG brand! Folly!) Just for the record, I refitted the original switch (which still looks a bit tatty) and it's all been fine since.

Next serious outing was on the MG Regency Run from Brooklands to Brighton, 11th May – the hottest day of the year so far as it turned out. "M" needed to be on her best behaviour, since I was being co-driven and navigated by the well-known David Washbourne, MG enthusiast and guru "ExtraExtraordinaire"! We made the first hour or so OK, but a missed turning, and the need to turn around, rather caught us out, and the lady heaved a gentle sigh, and collapsed in a fit of the vapours (isation!?). Well, after this enforced "coffee break" and a 10 minute rest, we were off again OK, but the slow, traffic-impeded run over downs into Brighton, with electric fan working overtime, caught us out again a mile or so from the Finish. Same remedy; quick 10 minute "rest" and coffee, and we then made it to Madiera Drive in time for (late) lunch.

"Professor" Washbourne then indulged in a little post-prandial corrective surgery, having pronounced that Matilda was "running too weak" (well lots of girls do!), and we had a trouble free run back to N.Surrey – mind you it was somewhat cooler in the evening!

On now to MG Silverstone International weekend, the "Big One"! A bit of final "tweaking" of timing and carbs (with DW permission!) prior to departure, and I set off, with some trepidation, early on the morning of Friday (June)13th !! But, as it turned out, it was the best, most fun, long non-stop, cross–country run I've done since I had the car! Clean as a whistle, pulling strongly up the inclines, crisp exhaust notes, engine temperature steady at 75°C – just like a proper MG should be! And we managed all the On Track indulgences at Silverstone, and a similarly swift, trouble free return trip on the Sunday evening. So maybe the gremlins have been laid to rest; but only a few more runs like Silverstone will convince me that "it's sorted". . And since I didn't have much traffic to contend with, maybe we won't be venturing into the "Congestion Charge" zones for a little while yet!

Alan Wakefield (Servant and Slave to "CSV 875"!) Surrey, June 2008.

The TC Gas Tank - A Technical Review

The TC gas tank and its associated hardware have a number of distinct features that make it unique. If you are restoring a TC the following information will help you to understand how the tank was configured originally. The information provided will also give you some tips on how to cope with some of the proverbial problem areas of the tank.

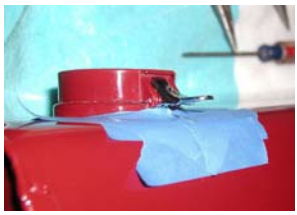
The Tank: The gas tank is the same as used on the TA and TB except the TA did not have a hole for a sending unit. The tank has 2 internal vertical baffles under the area of the tank straps. The purpose of the baffles is to minimize sloshing. One common problem with the tank is that it would rust internally and leak in the vicinity of the 2 metal "feet". To correct any leaks in this area, the 2 feet should be removed by drilling out the spot welds. Once the feet are removed, you will then have access to repair the sheet metal in the bottom of the tank. Any restoration today should involve the internal sealing of the gas tank with a modern gas tank sealer. This will help to preserve the tank and also solve a lot of corrosion problems and help to keep rust particles from entering the fuel system.

Gas Cap: The filler neck on the tank is made of brass. Early TCs had some filler necks that were rotated so the cap trigger was at the 8 o'clock position versus the traditional TC 6 o'clock position. The cap is attached to the filler neck by a simple cotter pin through the flanges on the filler neck. The cap is secured in the closed position with a large "tab" spring by simply pushing the cap closed. Refurbishment of the cap is simple but re-assembly is sometimes confusing. The assembly order of gas cap parts is: large spring tab, coil spring, large flat washer with a slot in it, hex-headed spacer, gasket, washer with small hole, small washer (.5" O.D.) and brass hexagon nut. *(Reference: photo on right)* As a reminder, the stud in the center of the cap can be easily removed by using the hex spacer and hex nut double nutted together to turn out the stud to enable a re-chrome of the cap.

Gas Cap Trigger: Early TC triggers had the word "PRESS" on it. *(see photo at top of next page)* The word PRESS was replaced on later TC triggers with the MG logo. The trigger is held in place with a brass 6BA

slotted countersunk head screw. It is supported by a coiled spring. When you disassemble the trigger from the tank the slotted screw is normally hard to see with the paint. You will find the screw head towards the left side of the tank. Be careful removing this screw because replacements are difficult to find. Installation of an original spring is nearly impossible because of the tight quarters for the install and the need to compress the legs of the spring. The photo *(on left)* shows a new uncut spring, then a new one cut to replicate the original, and then an original spring to the far right. Replacing this small spring is difficult and almost a lost art. To replace the spring with a new one, use the following procedure: Protect the new paint job. Preposition the trigger screw in the flange.

Compress the spring with your fingers and then hold it compressed with a pair of needle nose pliers *(as per photo on the left).*



Align the spring and trigger holes and push the screw through all.

Now you can release the spring and it will hold the trigger up *(see photo on the left)*

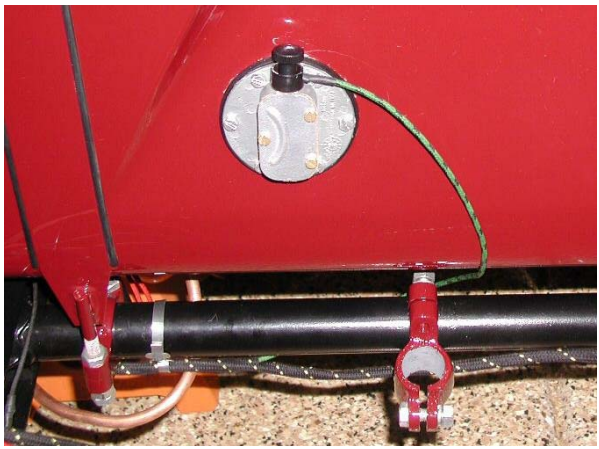
Reference the photo of original spring to get general idea of cuts and bends.

Cut the leg next to the trigger by about a ¼ inch and bend the end of it away from the trigger so it does not dig into the trigger when pressed down. Cut the leg resting on the tank by about ¼ to 3/8" and bend tip as necessary to conform to filler neck and tank and not gouge the paint.

Sending Unit: The sending unit is distinct for the TC in that it has 3 screws holding the cover plate and the connection was held by a bakelite threaded knurled edge knob and slotted protective collar *(see photo on the left)* (By comparison, the TD was changed to a sender unit with 4 screws on the cover plate and a cardboard "open box" type affair to protect the wire connection). If you look inside the TC sending unit switch, it is simply a copper tab that rotates to contact the brass contact plate to complete the circuit for the fuel low level light. It is simply on or off depending on the height of float inside

the tank *(see photo below right).* When refurbishing the sending unit, make sure the flanged edge is very smooth and even to give a true union to the tank. Similarly, make sure the surface of the tank flange is also true and straight. Block sand and file as necessary to get a true surface. The original sending unit gasket was cork. However, this is a common area of leakage. Therefore, join the unit to the tank with an improved flanged gasket *(shown on left)* and a petroleum resistant sealer used liberally. Popular products are "Seals All" and "Yamabond 4 or 5". Do not forget to seal the 6 – 3BA hex head screws that hold the sending unit. I do not recommend Teflon tape on the threads because it may cause continuity problems for grounding the unit and Teflon is not good for the fuel system. To prevent the screws from leaking, use instead, the gasket sealer around each screw and let the thread make good contact with the tank. Additionally, make sure the seal on the sending unit cover plate is good also, using the same principles stated above. This gasket can be easily hand made out of cork. *(as photo to the right shows).*

Fuel Filter and Drain Plug: In the center of the bottom of the tank there is a brass drain plug and also a brass connection for the fuel line that has a very fine mesh screen for filtering the fuel entering the fuel line. Both have a fiber washer to complete the seal. If you suspect fuel contamination, first drain the tank with the center drain plug. Then disconnect the fuel line from the brass tank filter fitting and then remove the filter itself from the tank for cleaning.



About the Author: Doug Pelton has been researching many of the original aspects of

the MG TC in conjunction with the restoration of TC7670. Additionally, he has been able to source a number of hard to find parts to maintain originality and improve safety. If you are interested in the Bakelite knob and collar, trigger spring, and the improved sending unit seal discussed above or many other hard to find items for the TC, contact Doug for a catalog at dougpelton@cox.net or 602-690-4927.

Ed's Note: Fitting the gas cap trigger spring appeared in the May TTT but I have left it in this more comprehensive article about the gas (petrol) tank. As mentioned in previous issues of TTT, I am happy to collect orders on behalf of Doug and distribute them within the UK. I have done this for the pedal return sets, the throttle return spring and the gas cap trigger springs. At present I have just one gas cap trigger spring, one throttle return spring and two sets of foot pedal return springs (sales of these items at Silverstone were very good!).

Doug's catalogue was published in May's TTT. I will publish details of new items as and when I receive details from Doug.

Competition – Can you identify this part?

There was no correct answer to the competition in the March TTT, which was repeated in the May Issue. The answer was "looking through the spare wheel carrier of an MG TF". Better luck this time with the photo on the left.

Peter Edney Classic and Sports Cars is offering the winner a £50 voucher to spend on parts or services with the Company. All correct answers will be placed in a hat and a winner drawn.

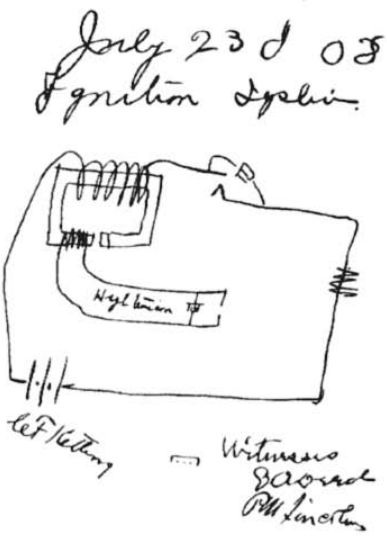
Please send your answer to: **Peter Edney Classic and Sports Cars, Unit 2, Woodside, High Easter Road, Leaden Roding, DUNMOW, Essex CM6 1QQ**

or e-mail **info(at)peteredney.co.uk (substitute @ for at).**

The Kettering Ignition System

This month marks the hundredth anniversary of the invention of the modern ignition system by Charles Franklin Kettering. Kettering, an American, was a prolific inventor. Amongst the other inventions with which he is credited include the spark plug, the electric cash register, the first starter motor as used in the Cadillac of 1912, leaded petrol, synthetic aviation fuel, the electric railway gate, quick drying paint, automatic transmission, a four wheel braking system, safety glass, high compression engines, and improvements to the diesel engine, which led to its wide spread use. He was also co-inventor of freon gas and the first air conditioning system.

Others may argue with some of these claims but plus or minus one or two there is no doubt we owe him a great deal, especially for his ignition system which was used in all T Series cars, exactly as he drew on **July 23rd 1908**.



Kettering's Ignition System

Before the ignition system that bears his name, cars relied on the costly magneto and before that on a hot rod placed inside the cylinder to ignite the fuel mixture.

The good news for T-Type owners, and for the owners of the majority of cars produced from around 1910 until almost 1990 is that the Kettering system works! With regular preventative maintenance to adjust or replace the contact breaker points it provides a reliable form of ignition. There were

improvements of course, such as the addition of a 'ballast' resistor used in series with the coil. This could be shorted out to compensate for the reduced battery voltage during engine cranking to improve starting, but such improvements were merely tinkering. Kettering's ignition system remained the mainstay of world-wide automotive production for nearly eighty years, and of course millions of classic cars still rely on the Kettering ignition system today.

The bad news is that the Kettering system doesn't work particularly well. The fundamental problem is the coil which is used to store energy during the 'dwell' period when the contact breaker points are closed and then deliver it via the distributor to the relevant spark plug soon after the points open. The coil used on T-Series cars, the Lucas Q12, can only store a limited amount of energy. This reduces as engine speed increases (and hence dwell time reduces) so that at around 4000 rpm the energy stored in the coil is only around half that at tick over, and incidentally about a tenth of that available in a modern ignition system. This leads to incomplete combustion of the fuel-air mixture at higher engine revs and hence higher emissions than permitted for modern vehicles.

There were period alternative coils available such as the Lucas 'Sports' coil and the glass bodied Runbaken 'Coil in Oil' coil but these again were mere tinkerings that used more current and thus shortened the life of the already hard pressed points.

Photo: **Period Coils (L-R) Runbaken Coil, Lucas Q12, Lucas 'Sports' Coil.**

Another Achilles heel of the Kettering system is what is still affectionately known in automotive circles as the 'condenser', but in every other sphere of electrical and electronic engineering has for the last fifty years been called a capacitor. The purpose of the condenser is to delay the formation of the spark until the points have opened sufficiently, otherwise most of the energy stored in the coil would be wasted in an arc between the barely open points, resulting in little or no spark at the plug. The condenser has an arduous life in the hostile

environment inside the distributor, right next to the engine block. Modern capacitors made from more robust materials can survive quite happily in these conditions but parts made from the best materials available a century ago struggled and often failed prematurely.

The introduction of the 'transistor assisted' ignition in the 1980s allowed the use of coils that could store more energy without overburdening the points, and also removed the need for the condenser. These early electronic ignition systems have evolved into the modern ignition systems used today, which use a coil controlled by a transistor, which is in turn controlled by the engine management system.

Again along the way were other tinkerings such as the 'wasted spark' system favoured by Citroen for the 2CV. This system remains popular today, as it dispenses with the distributor. Instead it uses a coil with two high voltage outputs, one for each cylinder. A four-cylinder engine can use two such coils, and so on for larger engines. All these ignition systems stem directly from the Kettering's original system.

To start the engine easily and allow it to run efficiently the ignition system has to provide the spark plug with sufficient voltage to initiate the spark and sufficient energy to ignite the fuel mixture. A new plug will need around 10,000 volts before it will produce a spark but this can rise to more than twice that when it becomes fouled or the electrodes wear and the gap increases. The spark voltage also increases with compression ratio. At these higher voltage levels the coil, especially an original Q12 that is probably fifty or more years old now, can start to fail. So too can the distributor cap which may start to breakdown if it is dirty or cracked.

Once the spark has initiated the voltage across the plug gap falls to around 1000 volts. The ability of the spark to ignite the fuel is a function of the amount of power than the coil can deliver at this voltage, which in the case of the Q12 is not very much.

The polarity of the voltage presented to the plug by the coil is also important. Ideally it should be negative. If the voltage is positive a plug will require around 30% more voltage to produce a spark. It is therefore important to ensure the coil is connected correctly. Originally all T Types had the positive terminal of the battery connected to chassis. Thus with the right coil connected correctly with the 'CB' terminal connected to the distributor and the 'SW' terminal connected to the negative side of the battery it will provide a negative spark voltage. If you have reversed the polarity of your battery you will need to reverse the connection to your coil in order for the coil to produce a negative spark. Even then it will be marginally less efficient that it was with a positive earth battery.

For those people who missed this year's 'Rebuild', listed below are the preferred plug types and gap sizes as recommended by NGK. Equivalent plugs are available from other manufacturers.

Car	Original Plug	Plug Type	Gap
TA	L10S	B6HS	0.021 (0.5mm)
TB	L10S	B6HS	0.021 (0.5mm)
TC	L10S	B6HS	0.021 (0.5mm)
Early TD	L10S	B6HS	0.021 (0.5mm)
Late TD	NA8	B6ES	0.021 (0.5mm)
TF 1250	NA8	B6ES	0.021 (0.5mm)
TF1500	NA8	B6ES	0.021 (0.5mm)

Peter Cole

Ed's Note: Thanks for a fascinating article Peter. As this is of general interest for all MG owners (certainly up to the last MGBs produced before the Factory closed in 1980), I'm going to send it to "Safety Fast!" – but remember – you saw it first in TTT!

This article also set me thinking about upgrading to a more modern ignition system and high capacity coil (I was already chewing over the Jolley Engineering system with special coil which was the subject of a November 2007 "Safety Fast!" 'advertorial), but as Paul Camp concludes in his note below, the PB is running so well that I am afraid to upset it

"Last year I was having problems with misfiring etc on the MGB and replaced all the ignition parts to no avail. I came to the conclusion that the distributor was somewhat worn and a replacement was probably the answer. After reading the SC parts advert in "Safety Fast!" I sent off for details of their 123 replacement distributor, and after making one or two enquiries locally I decided to purchase one. The people at S & C parts were most helpful and informative (they even suggested an answer to my fault that didn't require a new dizzy!)

I fitted the 123 replacement distributor to my MGB together with a sports coil and new leads, it was made a very simple job by following the very easy and detailed instructions and the effect transformed the performance - much lower idling revs are achieved without lumpy running and the performance is consistent right through the rev range with no flat spots. The petrol consumption also was improved. The cost was around £200 and has made significant improvement to the feel of the car.

I am contemplating fitting it to the MGA - but that car is running so well I feel I should leave well alone!! 123 do make a dizzy for T types, which prompted me to send this information, however the replacement has a red cover and may not appeal to the purists amongst us".

INSPECTORS WANTED!

Since the 1990s the 'T' Register, along with many other recognised vehicle owner Clubs, has provided a service to assist owners wishing to reclaim either a lost original registration mark for their T-Type or obtain a new age-related mark for an imported or a restored car where insufficient evidence exists to link the car to its original number. These last two cases require what is known as a 'dating certificate letter' to be issued.

In the past this service has normally operated by each Club or Register having one or two members, usually a Committee member or a senior officer, as the authorised person(s) to receive, investigate and decide on the written application submitted by the vehicle owner. Where insufficient documentary or photographic evidence to support the application was not forthcoming or perhaps inconsistencies came to light, the Club/Register reserved the right to request a physical inspection of the vehicle before a decision was reached and the paperwork submitted to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for final approval. An inspection was only required in a minority of cases. Broadly speaking, this procedure, certainly in the case of the 'T' Register, worked extremely well and resulted in many satisfied owners and in some cases a new member of the Club.

However, the DVLA, supported by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) of which the MGCC is a member, have now decided to introduce a new requirement. Where an application to reclaim a lost registration mark is made, or where a dating certificate is required, it is now deemed necessary that a physical vehicle inspection must become standard practice. It is not difficult to understand why this added requirement is being introduced but it is less easy for an organisation such as ourselves, made up entirely of unpaid volunteers, to see how it can be best managed. In view of the widespread geographical location of T-Type owners and the fact that only two 'T' Register Committee members are authorised by the DVLA to sign, (myself – Roy Miller and Stewart Penfound in my absence), it will quickly be recognised that there will be occasions when we, or indeed any other member of your hardworking committee, are simply unable to travel the length and breadth of the UK in order to conduct a physical inspection of the car in question. It is proposed therefore that a list of willing helpers is compiled who could be called upon to assist if circumstances necessitate. As we have no idea where the next application will emanate from, the chances of being contacted are probably slim but it would be useful to have a name and number ready. The duties would be to visit the owner of the T-Type requiring verification in your locality at a mutually convenient time, conduct a basic physical inspection to ensure that the vehicle exists in the form claimed, and conforms to the supporting

paperwork. Finally, report back to myself or Stewart as appropriate so that the application can then be approved or otherwise. You do not need to be an expert in all versions of T-Types, just be able to recognize the different models (occasionally from part assembled components) and know where to find the chassis and engine numbers.

This could be an excellent opportunity to meet a fellow T-Type owner near to you and assist in continuing to provide a service that helps to put another T-Type back on the road. The 'T' Register would reimburse expenses such as reasonable petrol and telephone costs. The Register, does incidentally, charge a fee to applicants towards the cost of conducting the service- £20 for MG Car Club members, £25 for non-members.

If this interesting aspect of the Register's work is something that appeals and you would like to be added to the list of potential inspectors, please contact me - Roy Miller by email (roymill(at)waitrose.com) (substitute @ for at) or telephone 01451 824223. I look forward to hearing from you.

ROY MILLER

Care with those Modifications!

This article has come about as a result of correspondence between Roger Wilson and your Editor and subsequently involving TD/TF Technical Specialist, Barrie Jones.

Before explaining the background it is as well to state from the outset that if you carry out modifications to your car you should advise your Insurance Company. If in doubt about even a minor 'mod' advise them anyway – better to be safe than sorry!

Now to the background. Roger had noted a report in the June "Safety Fast!" about a YT being extensively modified with MGB parts, including the fitting of MGB suspension. He pointed out that, on the face of it, this would negate Ackerman principles incorporated in the steering as the angles the steering arms make to the car centre line are designed for a car with a wheelbase of 91", but the Y type has a wheelbase of 99", thus there is a difference of 8".

All very well if you are reading this and you understand the Ackerman steering principle. My guess is that quite a few of us don't so I'm extracting a couple of diagrams and some text from a very useful article from the 1995 Yearbook by Roger Furneaux on TC Steering. The extracts follow:

THE ACKERMAN SYSTEM

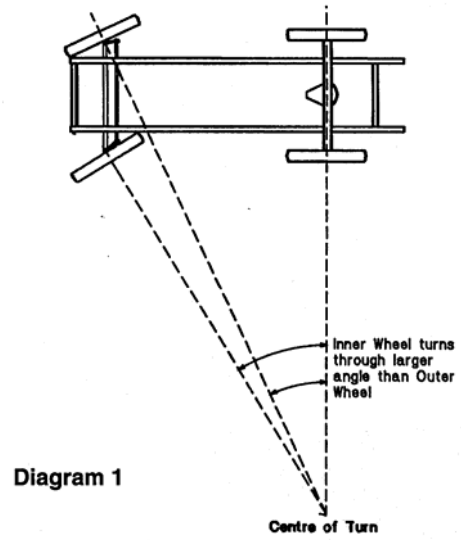


Diagram 1

The geometry of this system is such that when the front wheels turn, lines drawn through their axles intersect at the same point on a line drawn through the rear axle *(see diagram 1)*. This is achieved by having the steering arms, connected by the track rod, angled such that lines drawn through the kingpins and the ball-joints will intersect in the differential *(see diagram2 overleaf)*. What all this means is that whichever wheel is on the inside of the steering circle, turns through a greater angle than the outer one, but each wheel is

always tangential to the circle it describes.

Only by the front wheels acting together on this principle can correct steering be achieved: any inaccuracies, such as bent steering arms as a result of too much 'kerb-hopping', a bent chassis or axle beam, or even saggy road springs, will cause excessive drag on the tyres when cornering, giving heavy steering and leading to excessive tyre wear.

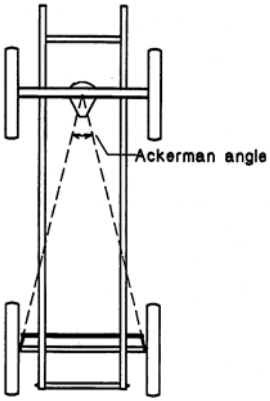


Diagram 2

Hopefully the above is clear to you – the subject has been covered in depth elsewhere, and I seem to remember lengthy correspondence on the subject in the Octagon *Bulletin*.

Now, to get back to the point of the article, I thought that I would ask Barrie Jones for his thoughts on the matter. Here is an extract from what Barrie said:

"The Ackerman angle can be altered by adjusting the amount of toe-in. A small increase in toe-in will move the Ackerman point back considerably, and vice-versa. The TD, TF and MGA were all designed with zero toe-in. The MGB specification is 1.5mm to 2.3mm toe-in, presumably because of the longer wheelbase. So, if you fit MGB front suspension to a TD/TF then you must reduce the toe-in to bring the Ackerman point forward, and a professional kit should contain this information in the fitting instructions".

He later followed this up with the following:

"I just calculated the Ackerman angles we are talking about. The MGB angle is 14.0 degrees, whilst a TF is 14.4 degrees. What we are talking about is a difference of 0.4 of a degree. Adjustment of the toe-in will easily accommodate such a small difference. Also, one cannot assume that the MGB was originally set up with the theoretically `ideal' Ackerman in the first place. Having the Ackerman point slightly in front of the rear axle gives a noticeably sharp turn-in, whilst having it slightly to the rear gives a smoothing effect to the steering by slightly delaying turn-in. Car designers know this, and most sports cars are set up the former way, whereas most family saloon cars are set up the latter way".

And again……

"I have just read Classic & Sports Car July 2008. On page 188 they state that the Lotus Excel has an Ackerman angle of zero, *`so that the car achieves a sharper steering response when driving'*. The trade-off is that

the tyres squeal a lot when on tight lock, such as when manoeuvring into a tight parking space".

Following on from this, the mention of fitting MGA or MGB disc brakes to a TD/TF prompted the following safety warning from Barrie:

"By the way, I have another concern. MGA and MGB disc callipers are much larger in diameter than drum brake cylinders, so a small movement in the calliper will consume much more fluid, and the TD/TF master cylinder was never designed to cope with that volume. I would strongly recommend the fitting of an additional remote brake fluid container".

This article is beginning to ramble a bit, but the mention of MGA/MGB disc brakes reminded me of the following from Bob Marshall:

"After 50 plus use or non use of the brakes, the drums on many cars are wearing out and in some instances the shoes have to be shimmed in order to make the brakes effective. One option is to convert the front brakes to discs using components from MGA/B. Another is to use shims between the shoes and the adjusters but the real answer is to make new drums.

Last year I was quoted a price for casting drums at around £120 per drum. This was not volume related and whilst it may seem dear, less than £500 is far, far cheaper than a wrecked car.

What Is the demand for sets of drums? How many TD/TF owners would be prepared to buy new drums?

If you are interested please let Bob Marshall know".
marshallsuebob(at)hotmail.com (substitute @ for at)

MORE T-TYPE TALES BY COLIN PAMPLIN

(Readers may remember the amusing anecdotes and tales told by Colin in the January 08 TTT arising out of his ownership of his TC, Registration number EYG 520. Here is a further instalment, but this time it concerns another TC he owned, Registration number AEE 6).

Following the write-off of my TC (EYG 520) in 1958, a T-less couple of months followed until Dad, who was also an M.G. man, (1932 D-Type, 1955 ZA Magnette and a couple of Issigonis FWDs) found AEE 6 in a barn behind a Petrol Station. After a quick inspection, a price was agreed and I was back motoring. AAE 6 was a 1947 TC in British Racing Green, rust free, but still with dodgy tyres. One of the tyres had a side wall split, which was stuck up with black Bostik and the others only had apologies for treads.

One rainy Saturday I remember going with brother Chris to a football match at Fratton Park, Portsmouth, when on the A32 at Droxford I became aware that we were getting wheel spin going uphill and zero traction going down. The remedy employed was to let the tyres down and brother and I got to the match without further incident. I had the car for eight years and it never let me down. Somehow, I always managed to get home if problems occurred, even on one occasion with a broken crank.

During that eight years I can remember a couple of scary moments that looking back on it could have ended rather differently than they did. By this time I had moved out of London and having married a local Alton girl, I got a local D.O. job in Basingstoke. To help with the running costs to work and back, I offered daily transport to a young Quantity Surveyor called Bob, who also happened to be a Congregational lay preacher. Bob was a quiet, nervous type who wasn't too keen on travelling in an agricultural vehicle with limited forward vision; however it was cheaper than the bus and quicker.

One winter's morning, hurtling along the A339, late as usual, we approached Winslade Hill and became aware of people on all fours, crawling up the road, frantically trying to attract our attention. As we breasted a rise, all became horribly clear – the people had been passengers in a bus that had become stuck on the hill due to black ice. The bus was broadside across the road with several other vehicles sliding about behind it trying to get past.

You can imagine the scenario – murky freezing conditions, tree-lined road glistening with black ice, bus stranded across it.

We have all been taught that in conditions like that you do not brake. What did I do?? I ignored all I had been taught, panicked and slammed the brakes on as hard as I could. All four wheels locked and we continued down the hill at unabated speed heading for potential disaster. I then became aware that Bob in the passenger seat and gripping the grab handle for dear life, was praying loudly. He was obviously successful in his devotions as we somehow avoided the bus, the crawling passengers and the vehicles behind and after what seemed like a lifetime, took to the verge and bouncing across the drainage gullies, scrubbed off some speed before eventually regaining the road. Bob opened his eyes, relaxed his grip on the grab handle and smiled. He never said a word and we continued to work in silence.

The incident was never spoken about, but I very nearly became a Congregationalist!

In another incident on that same road, but this time without divine intervention, (Bob had moved on by this time) late for work again and in pouring rain, the outer layer of the double duck hood fabric on the TC finally gave way and split across the middle frame iron. Now you would have thought that with the position of the split, the flapping soggy material would have blown back and remained flat to the top of the car, but no, it came forward completely covering the screen; there I was, totally blind with a bend coming up. Brake carefully, keep the wheels straight and hope was all that I could do. The next I knew I was bouncing about in a cornfield; as luck would have it, on the apex of the corner was an open field gate and I

somehow passed cleanly between the posts and ended up in the wheat, upright if a little shaken. The replacement hood was in one thickness PVC!!

Another abiding memory was when my then wife, who was 7 months pregnant, decided to learn to drive and having had the usual basic training on a local airfield, (where on one occasion she somehow managed to run the TC up a huge heap of Council road stone and had to be dug out) duly came to the day of her test. The evening before I had cleaned and tuned the car and re-set the slow running. However, unfortunately, a fast run from Alton to Winchester for the test upset my adjustments and the engine kept stalling.

It was a lovely May Morning, the hood was down and the examiner was in shirtsleeve order. He climbed into the TC with difficulty and they set off. However, ten minutes later he appeared back at the Test Centre on foot his exposed arms and neck bright red from a severe attack of psoriasis and muttering expletives about open cars and women drivers. He had abandoned my pregnant wife and the Test in the city centre half a mile up the road. There was mention later that the car had stalled at every set of traffic lights and on one occasion had been bounced over a kerb. Apparently a refund for a Test fee was not applicable!

AEE 6 was finally sold in 1966 as my parents thought that their first grandchild should be transported rather more securely than in a Moses basket wedged behind the seat of a TC! I had to wait forty years for the next one (TC that is!) but that's another story.

T-Type parts are very versatile! (Photo sent in by Bert Dive)

QUESTIONS TO AND ANSWERS FROM THE TD/TF TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

Barrie Jones, the Register TD/TF Technical Specialist kindly keeps me informed of requests for technical advice received by him and the answers he supplies. Here are a couple of the questions and answers since the last issue.

Question *My 1953 TD (TD2 engine - original, leaded head, 62,000 miles from new!) has a problem only noted on warm days after running up to temperature (usually reading 80-85 degrees, occasionally 90 in traffic jams). It is an excellent starter and runs well. About 2 years (700 miles) ago, it developed this fault. When I stopped during a drive (ice cream purchase usually!), it was very difficult/refused to start until it had stood for about 15 minutes. Recently after driving for about an hour, it began running roughly, eventually cutting out altogether and refusing to start until it had stood for 20 minutes. During this time, suspecting fuel vaporisation, I checked the carbs. and both float chambers were full and the petrol pump hardly ticked. Do you know of other fuel-related problems I could check for, or/and could the ignition coil be breaking down at high temprature?*

Answer Yes, I have received many reports such as yours. Unfortunately, modern petrol is becoming more volatile and things will probably get worse as Bio-Ethanol is added in ever-increasing quantities.

I have seen encouraging reports regarding the addition of between 5% and 10% Paraffin to the petrol.

One problem is that a TD pump only delivers at low pressure, and if it is a bit worn, then the pressure can drop even more. The higher the pressure, the less likelihood of vaporisation in the fuel hoses. I presume that you have the original hoses with steel braid? If not, this will make your problem worse.

Another problem is the position of the float chambers next to the exhaust manifold. I have been recommending a heat shield for some years. My TF has one, and I do not have your problem.

Coils do get hot. You could try fitting a brand new Lucas sports coil. They are readily available for under £20.

There is a known problem with the XPAG distributor; however, this will cause an instant power failure, not rough running. If the distributor is positioned so that the side terminal is nearly touching the rev counter gearbox or the engine side breather, then as everything gets hot and expands, it can touch one of these items and cause the engine to stop suddenly. It then cools and the problem goes away.

I have had reports of a bad batch of distributor rotor arms, but once they fail

they do not recover.

So, to sum up: (1) Check fuel hoses are braided. (2) Fit a heat shield. (3) Try replacing the coil. (4) Try adding 5% paraffin to the petrol (you should first get a licence to do this – they are free).

Let me know how you get on. I rely on feedback to help others.

Ed's Note: This is reminiscent of the problems to be found in the "If All Else Fails, Try Everything!" article on page 13. With regards to the fitting of a heat shield, these are available commercially. However, there is also an article in one of the Yearbooks on how to make one by Barrie Jones. Perhaps I'll reprint this in the September TTT.

Question *I wonder if you could advise me on a method of resolving my TF hood pivot clasp connection to the body.*

The screwed connection (just at the back of the seats) that goes into the ash frame on my car does not have captive nuts, but is screwed directly into the ash frame. This has worn away the wood from around the screw hole and now it is not possible to screw the bracket clasp down. I thought of using thicker screws, but they will not go through the bracket holes, I even tried longer screws to no avail.
I then tried to fill the holes with slivers of wood and it worked and held the bracket to the body...that is till I tried to put up the hood when it separated!!!

Any ideas on what I can do??

Answer This is a job for a carpenter, not a mechanic! You must have solid wood to screw into.

I suggest that you get some 10mm diameter hardwood dowels and some good quality wood glue. Measure the thickness of the panel and put some sticky tape around a 10mm drill, so that you do not drill too deeply. Now drill through the old screw holes, inject wood glue into the holes, and insert the dowels gently with a hammer. Leave the glue to dry and harden, preferably for at least 24 hours. Cut the ends of the dowels flush with the old wood, and drill the dowels to take the original small screws.

Spares news

As readers probably know (but there is no harm in repeating the message) the Register does not deal in new spares. Any new spares that are offered by members not in business, are funded by them on a non-profit making (to themselves) basis with any excess income being donated to Register funds. A recent example was the sale of some of Bob Grunau's items at Silverstone, which resulted in a donation to the Register of £80. Currently on offer is a new batch of kingpins and bushes for TA*/B/C (*from TA1253)

which, at the time of writing are waiting for a percentage sample to be tested before being sent out). These are high quality sets, whose specification has been previously given in earlier issues of TTT. The bushes in these sets are of the 'wrapped' type as per the original equipment and the thrust washers are to an improved design.

This is the fourth batch of these king pins and bushes sets and the price we have had to pay the manufacturer has progressively increased since the first batch (paid for in February 2007) due to increases in the cost of materials. Whilst it is just about possible to offer them for sale at £65 per set (plus postage of £6.20) the margin for error on an up front outlay of £1300 is within £20. Therefore, in order to generate some income for the Register a donation of £5 with each set supplied is requested. Of the 20 sets, there are advance orders for 5, so at the time of writing, 15 sets are available for purchase. If you wish to order a set please send a cheque for £71.20 payable to John James and a separate cheque for £5 payable to "MGCC 'T' Register to me at 85 Bath Road, Keynsham, BRISTOL BS31 1SR. Overseas orders need to have a separate quote (due to postage costs), but payment by PayPal (only for Overseas orders) is available.

This latest order for kingpins and bushes sets has swallowed up the last of the 600 wrapped bushes we had in stock so we are seeking a quote for at least another 300 (this will probably entail an outlay of close on £2,000). Details of price and availability will be included in the September TTT.

Also on offer are the TA/TB/early TD oil filter adapters made by Bob Grunau and oil filter adapters for late TD and TF. Both these adapters use the metal spin on filters as opposed to the paper filters. Please e-mail John James (e-mail address on next page) for prices.

The lower shackle pins (for TC) are awaiting machining and should come out at around £50 each. As far as I know, these are not available from any of our advertisers but can be obtained from MOSS (if they have them in stock) at approximately double the price.

The special thick washers which register on the flats of the above mentioned pins and (as far as I am aware) are not available anywhere else are priced at £2 each. This low price is only possible because they fortunately escaped a minimum laser cutting charge.

Last but not least are the polyurethane bushes for the lower shackle pin on the TC. Unfortunately, I seem to have had to "go around the houses" on these but I have a contact and as soon as I finish this issue of TTT I'll have some time to do some finding out.

If you have a need for a part which is not available commercially please get in touch and we will see what we can do!

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