



‘T’REGISTER NEWS

NO 2 APRIL 2011



“THE INFAMOUS BLACK PIG”



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**A Message from the new Chairman of the MG
Car Club 'T' Register - Geoff Matthews**

This is the first of, I hope, many contributions I will be able make to **T Register News** as your new Chairman. To those of you who do not know me, and that will be by far the majority, I hope my relative inexperience and lack of knowledge of our cars will be forgivable. You will hear more of my introduction to MG T-Types in the piece John Ward has penned on Allan and Sue Scott and their car, The Black Pig, which Annie, my wife and I took over five years ago. All I will say is that I am keen to learn more and to help move the 'T' Register forward in what are quite difficult times for all of us.

I would like to emphasise I really want to help with communications with you all and please do not hesitate to contact me, by email, telephone or post with any comments or ideas and I look forward to speaking to many of you personally during my term of office.

On the theme of communication I hope you approve of the new style of **T Register News**, which, complemented by the MGCC website, our own 'T' Register website and "Safety Fast" will help you enjoy your membership more. I would also like to recommend John James independent communication, Totally T Type 2, and, if you have not yet subscribed to this excellent magazine, which concentrates more on technical content, do log on to his website at www.ttypes.org. I know that John will be happy to hear from any of you who wish to discuss any aspect of his new venture with him. Also, I cannot leave out of this introduction my thanks to John Ward, whose superb contribution has helped us all overcome some significant difficulties in recent months.

Well, that's all from me for this edition and don't forget, give me a call if you want to discuss any ideas or thoughts you may have to improve our Register. Geoff Matthews

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THE EDITORIAL

Firstly a warm welcome to our new Chairman and new Secretary, Geoff Matthews and Sally Silcock, I am sure they will both serve us well with all the usual dedication and effort provided on our behalf that we have been privileged to receive from all the past holders of these offices and do not forget that all this time is given voluntarily.

Geoff drives a well renowned TA which was for many years trialed and rallied by the illustrious duo, Alan and Sue Scott (more on this elsewhere).

Sally of course is no stranger to MG matters, husband Bill has been for many years a stalwart of the 'T' Register committee and organised Rebuild and Skills workshops for us on a number of occasions. However Bill has now moved upstairs so to speak recently joining the MGCC Main Board and was appointed Vice Chairman at the last AGM. However he will still maintain his 'T' Register interest representing us at council meetings etc....

We are pleased to announce that the first "prototype" TRN was generally well received by you all, therefore here is Edition 2, business as usual, but now on a quarterly basis.

Approximately 150 of you replied to our request asking for you to express your interest in the continuation of an exclusive MGCC 'T' Register Magazine following the demise of TTT. About 60 of those replies elected to receive a hard copy version which will be forwarded by post in the usual manner to the address given on the reply slip which was appended to Edition 1 in January. In future an email will be sent out to all those who provided an email address giving notice when future editions of TRN are posted on the website for downloading.

A significant number of replies added messages of support and encouragement. It is nice to know that our collective efforts on your behalf are not going unheeded and in vain.

If there has been an added benefit to the recent events, it has been that we now have the nucleus of an updated database of names and addresses and contact numbers of subscribers. It would be very useful and much appreciated if all the subscribers to TTT who received the question slip could fill it in and return same to complete our records.

I have just received the draft copy of the minutes of the AGM, the new Chairman and Secretary were confirmed as having been elected and taking up their respective forthwith are doubtless by now are well ensconced in their new roles. Names and contact details can be found at the end of this edition.

There was an in depth report presented by the Treasurer, Gillian Smith at the AGM on the current financial position of the 'T' Register accounts. It had been a difficult and time consuming task throughout the year sorting out the books and in particular reconciling the regalia stock and sales. This has meant putting in place a reliable system on a sound financial reporting base. She praised the regalia managers David Darrell and Roger Wilson for sterling work in assisting her in this task. Also all outstanding costs and dues and demands from the MGCC have now been resolved which enables us to move forward on a sound financial footing.

Official business now concluded after a problematic year and a new team in place perhaps we can now get on with the real raison d'etre, enjoying, driving, mending (not bending) T-type MG's

Best wishes
John Ward
Editor

FRONT COVER

As mentioned above our new Chairman is the proud owner of TA DBP 566, **the Black Pig**, having purchased it in 2005. Here he is in the car with his wife Annie, open top enjoying some sunshine on the recent Wadebridge Natter Spring Run. The picture was taken by photographer David Banks who marshaled at the event.

Geoff and Annie first joined the MG Car Club in November 2005 when they bought the TA, taking part in many Naviscats arranged by the SE Centre, the first being on 26th March 2006. Then on 14th May 2006 they went on their first big event - the Brooklands to Brighton MG Regency Run. Being rather unsure of its reliability, Geoff drove The Black Pig and Annie followed in the Landrover and trailer (just in case!). They shouldn't have doubted it as it went beautifully, with all the grandchildren of 7,8 and 11 years changing places en route, to all 3 riding with grandpa along Madeira Drive Promenade, in Brighton.

At the end of 2007 they moved down to Cornwall and joined the Wadebridge 'natter' and have enjoyed many events around the area ever since.

Since owning the car, they have attended every Autumn Tour and as many other events as possible. 2009 was a busy MG year going on the trip to the Ardennes in May and in September actually organising the 2009 Devon & Cornwall Autumn Tour. In June this year they are off to France & Belgium and are looking forward very much to that event.

Having recently attended the Brian Williams Run on 28th March, hoods down, side screens out, lovely sunshine, fantastic route along the south coast, finishing up with the cars having pride of place in the car park at St Mawes, and all the participants enjoying a delicious meal in the restaurant overlooking the harbour. Who could ask for more they ask?

Allan & Sue Scott and The Black Pig

Allan & Sue purchased TA DBP 566 on 1st April 1961 for £45.00 as, in his own words, 'a pretty neglected car' (the only good feature being the new hood). It may have only cost £45 to purchase it but a good deal more to repair it. (sounds like a familiar story!)

There followed two years of trauma and heartache and getting acquainted with it but still managing to drive it thousands of miles mainly on a regular basis between Farnborough and Gosport, as well as serving as transport for up to 6 persons to and from the pub on Saturday nights with the doors now held closed with parachute elastic.

One day they visited a farm and parked the car at the top of the farmyard. Various animals were loose and they were amused to see a small black piglet standing on the back of the seat. They tried to shoo it off, but it dropped into the foot well, panicked and tripped the 'flyoff' handbrake. The car set off downhill towards the sty! Allan dived over the tank, heaved on the lever and stopped just short of the sty wall, only to be confronted by a very angry large black sow. Piglet was released and Alan backed away - very slowly. With the number plate DBP, henceforth the car inevitably became known as "**The Black Pig**".

New Year 1963 and a total of 16 unrelated items of repair or maintenance were dealt with in January alone and the MOT was pending. He had always longed for a P type and found one in a tidal cellar in Portsmouth. The owner wanted to swap it for the TA in order to obtain the VA engine to put into a Tickford.

The deal was struck and having finally got an MOT for the PA at the end of February, it was a great relief to see the TA go and he did not see it again for another 10 years....

But then it returned to haunt him again....

But that's another story for another time.

Alan and Sue then continued for many years to have their love hate relationship with The Pig, entering countless trials and rallies, their most passionate being the Lands End Trial which they competed in many times.

Sadly some time ago Alan's eyesight began to fail but not daunted by this Sue now took over the wheel and Alan became the navigator and chief mechanic and the eventing went on. However the TA was proving to be a tough challenge for her and the decision was made to sell the now beloved Pig and buy a modern - **so they bought a TD** - which Sue drives to this day. Tragically Alan has now lost his sight completely but not daunted, there he was at Rebuild this year still contributing and giving us his wealth of T-type experiences.

NEWS AND EVENTS

PAST EVENTS

STONELEIGH 2011

Peter Cole organised the 'T' Register stand for us at the **MG International Trades and Spares Show** at the Stoneleigh Showground in Warwickshire on **Sunday 20th February 2011**.

This year the event did not suffer from the vagaries of the seasonal British weather of ice and snow, we got the winter earlier in December and January.

The result was a packed show ground, we got there a bit late and had to park about half a mile away. There was quite a queue to get in so it was certainly worth buying a ticket in advance saving both time and money.

The 'T' Register stand was well supported and a regular sale of regalia and members spares was transpired. Our stand was this year was away from the usual T-type traders but it did

not seem to diminish our efforts and the stand was clearly displayed under the 'T' Register Banner in Hall 1.

Many thanks to Peter Cole and all the members of the committee who manned the stall all day on a shift basis.

REBUILD 2011

The 21st Annual "T-Rebuild" event took place on **Saturday 5th March 2011** at the **Oxford & Cherwell Valley College (OCVC), Performance and Motorsport Centre, Bicester, OX26 4LA**. This was the third Register event run at the College, which proves very satisfactory for this type of event. (*But see below on possible difficulties with continuing at this venue*).

74 delegates attended, the majority being MGCC members paying the members fee of £25.00.

(Five delegates paid non members rate of £32.50; only a few future owners/relatives attended at the concessionary rate of £12.50. 14 committee members/organisers/helpers etc attended and there were 7 speakers/presenters (details in attached schedules).

The overall total of participants was about 95 which is the limit imposed by the college for this type of event.

As in previous years, there were two 'streams' of presentations running in parallel, in separate rooms.

A total of 8 sessions were completed; with each "stream" having 2x morning sessions and 2x afternoon sessions. Each 'stream' was mainly associated with a particular classroom or workshop location. Delegates were not constrained to any particular stream and only one presentation was repeated.



The traditional “**Bring and Buy**” spares and parts “market” was run by Barry Knight, assisted by Keith Doherty. “**Regalia**” Sales were also planned, but were unfortunately very limited by the unavoidable absence through illness of David Darell, who holds the Regalia stock/supplies. Roger Wilson dealt with the modest quantity of items that could be offered.

Welding workshop skills training was provided by Peter Reeves of the OCVC during the afternoon and about 6/8 attendees took advantage of this.

Catering was provided by Tailor Made Catering Solutions (June Foreman), which again proved very satisfactory, with good variety, quality, quantity and choice. The re-establishment of the traditional “bacon roll”/morning refreshments for arriving delegates was much appreciated.

Feedback from delegates, both on the day, in feedback forms, and subsequent emails etc, was positive and complimentary, both on programme content and standards, and on the venue, support services and event organisation.

We also raised £105 from voluntary contributions to the MG Car Club’s fund raising project in support of MGCC New Zealand.

Pre Event Organisation

Speakers selection, programme, pre -event liaison with OCVC etc. was handled by Alan Wakefield, with delegate bookings, receipt of payments, and pre-event communication with applicants etc. being done by Peter Cole as were subsequent payments to suppliers, expenses to presenters and other administrative expenses .

Many thanks to Bill and Sally Silcock who set up and tested/ran the various presenters’ Powerpoint /AV support programs; produced on-site signage, hard copy of presenters notes; and ran the welcome/registration desk service (Annie Matthews also helped there)

A further benefit was the ability to gain access to the College for a couple of hours on Friday evening in order to set up the various rooms, test the AV systems, arrange with Catering their location set up, and generally prepare the place. Help from Peter Cole, Bill & Sally Silcock, Jonathan Goddard and others that evening was very much appreciated.

A note for next year.

OCVC have indicated that they will no longer be able to offer the College facilities at the rate charged this year. Charges will be on an hourly rate basis in future, which, for the amount of time we would need (including Friday evening set up) could cause Hire Charges to TREBLE (i.e. £750 compared to £250). That would require us to raise the event fee by at least £7.50 to £32.50 from £25 - just to cover this extra cost and not considering additional food price rises!

Alan Wakefield – March 2011

Note.

All the handout notes prepared by the presenters may be available upon application, contact the Editor to arrange this.

THE SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS & PRESENTERS AT REBUILD 2011

" Practical MG TD" - Jonathan Goddard, based on his recent book

" Update Your TA/B/C Rear Ends" - Roger Furneaux, a "hands on" live demo rebuild of axles etc.

"Life and Times of a T- Race Engineer" - Iain Rooney (Pilot Motorsport)

"T-Types/XPAGs and Modern Fuel - a Case History" - Paul Ireland.

" XPAGs and Modern Fuel" - followed by "Fuel for Thought" - Open Discussion Forum - with panel including: Paul Ireland, Barrie Jones and others

"T- Electrics, Maintenance & Modernisation" - Barrie Jones

"T- Instruments - What makes them Tick?"(or Life Behind the Dashboard) - Tim Ingle, Speedograph-Richfield

Also as before Peter Reeve of the college staff was available to conduct an afternoon session on welding techniques with a chance for some to get their hands on a welding torch!



An inside view of Jonathan Goddard's TD displayed at Rebuild

SILVERSTONE *Live* 2011

Tickets are now on sale for **Silverstone *Live* 2011** which will be from 24th to 26th June. Once more a great MG weekend in store at the home of British Motor Sport and a notable date for all 'T' Register members to congregate.

The 75th Birthday of the TA falls on the 25th of June which coincides with Saturday at Silverstone MG *Live*. We would like to see as many of you as possible with your TA's to celebrate this occasion on this very special day. It is hoped to hold a session in the Arena which heralded the beginning of the T-Type era.

The 'T' Register Friday night natter will again be the place to be, from about 5.30 onwards, lively banter, meeting old mates, free drinks and nibbles, a great display of T-type Specials organized of course by Keith Hodder, it does not get any better!

Volunteers are always welcomed throughout the 3 days to assist in the activities with the added bonus of concessionary tickets dependent upon the amount of time that you are able to give. Contact Bill Silcock or any of the MGCC staff and register your availability now.

THE 'T' REGISTER 'T' PARTY 2011

No firm date or venue for a 'T' Party yet but watch out for further announcements.

THE AUTUMN TOUR 2011

The organisers have confirmed that all of the available accommodation for the 2011 Autumn Tour to the Yorkshire Dales has now been booked.

To check on any cancellations contact Grant or Barbara on 01969 622108 or email grant.chumphreys@btinternet.com

2010 'T' RACER REVIEW

By Jonathan Harmer

Having settled into the role of Competition Secretary I am beginning to see the wood for the trees! I believe that all XPAG engined cars should come under the general heading of 'T' Racers, although I am sure there is something to debate there! This report should be seen in that light.

Firstly, the positives. We have just had a brilliant weekend at the Lygon Arms and it was very nice to see some new faces, in particular Gillian Smith, Peter Cole, Martin Price and Tony Smith. The driver's meeting was one of the best for many years and some good decisions for the future were taken. The Lygon looked after us very well and the film clips were a great success [despite the odd glitch!]

Overall T-types and Specials have taken part in many events both in the UK and overseas including Italy, Denmark and France. The real bright spot in the whole situation is the Luffield Speed Championship. This is one of the best kept secrets and when you start looking at the 26 opportunities for hill climbs and sprints it really is a very successful championship. Tony Smith is standing for the committee to represent the sprint and hill climb entries and I think this is very worthwhile. Surely one of our tasks must be to ensure proper publicity as this is one way to bring new entrants in, not only to hill climbing but also perhaps through to circuits. Looking at the results for 2010 in Luffield National Group 3, Keith Benningfield came 1st in his supercharged, TC with David Butler 2nd in the TD Special and Chris Pamplin 3rd in the Dargue. In the Luffield Southern Series Howard Harman was 1st in his supercharged PA with Tony Smith 2nd in his TA Special and Stuart Penfound 3rd in his Lester. Interestingly at my first event in 1983 at Prescott Hill Climb there were 21 T-types – happy days!

We now come to Circuit Racing and here the position currently not so bright. The MG Live Silverstone always gets a good turnout but after that we are struggling. This is for a number of reasons from a perceived lack of races for our sort of cars to few new entrants, etc., etc. Having said that, if we can turn people on, we can get a decent grid. With that in mind, I have been pushing for a pre '60's race series to cover other groups as well as T-types who have the same problems. For example AC, Astons, Jowetts, T R's, etc.

The MG Car Club have offered us a race at Donnington on August 28th providing we can get 20 entries, as I write we are up to 17 and are nearly there. If this succeeds we will have a series in 2012 and I believe this will secure the future, not just for us but for others as race organisers simply cannot afford to have low grids any more. It will also offer very exciting 50's racing as it used to be, shades of Goodwood!

Looking back at 2010, the 'T Tray' was won by Tim Patchett, the 'Koni' by Nick Ashman, the 'Birmingham' by Richard Green and Class D by Alex Quatelbaum. The Kimber Trophy for 1st over the line at Silverstone will go to either Peter Edney or Tim Patchett depending on engines! The Malcolm Hogg trophy will be voted on at Silverstone when everybody is present.

Looking at 2011 we have races definitely at Silverstone, hopefully at The Bentley Drivers Club meeting at Donnington and I am proposing Snetterton which is the last race meeting of the year for both a race and the driver relay. In 2010 the 'T' Racers came third out of 18 which was a great result. I am also considering Oulton Park if there is support and perhaps a hill climb.

Finally, for 2011 also I hope we can do more with the web site and Martin Price has very kindly offered to do a monthly newsletter which is really positive.

This will go to all the XPAG engine community with the intention of keeping everyone in touch with other and generating a positive going forward enthusiasm.

Jonathan Harmer
MGCC Competition Secretary
March 2011

The Luffield Speed Championship

Report on Round 1 at Mallory Park on 20th March 2011 by Tony Smith

Mallory Park is situated next to the village of Kirby Mallory, a few miles west of Leicester and easily reached from the M1. As far as I know, this is the first time this venue has been part of the Luffield series and what a great event it was. This event was organised by the British Automobile Racing Club (BARC)

I first went to Mallory as a young boy in the mid 60's when we used to sneak in under the wire to watch whatever was going on. More recently I had been to Mallory in 2009 to provide support to a friend testing his Formula Renault and had been less than impressed. The paddock was more like a ploughed field and the ultra low Renault was always grounding out. That has all changed, now all the facilities are first rate and the top half of the paddock has a fresh tarmac surface.

The track has also been resurfaced this winter so it was like driving on a grippy billiard board having only been used for one event before us. Wish the DOT could learn a lesson from this, as driving a T-type on British roads is becoming an ever more rough experience!

The weather was kind to us, though overcast and chilly at 8am, changing to weak sunshine later in the day. At least the early spots of morning rain on the windscreen as we approached the circuit didn't develop into anything more serious.

There were 23 Luffield entries, of which 5 were MG T-types, from a total field of 91 which included everything from Radicals to Austin 7's and even a diesel 'X' type Jaguar. Just shows that anything goes and anyone with a road going T-type would thoroughly enjoy the experience.

The sprint consisted of one lap of the 'Bike' circuit which is the full circuit with three chicanes added to keep speed sensible. If there is one thing I would ask the organisers to consider next time is to use the 'Car' version of the circuit which is without the chicanes. The car circuit flows really well and is a delight to drive. Honestly, this suggestion has nothing to do with the practice incident where yours truly had to report to race control and have his wrist slapped by the Clerk of the Course (God) for missing part of the first chicane!

The competition between the T-types is always good humoured and the five cars at Mallory represented a true cross section of their type. There was the supercharged racer of Peter Greenaway on sticky 15inch Avons , David Butler's 1500 TD Special, my TA Special, Martin Price's near standard XPAG engine TA on 16's and Ian Potts supercharged TC. We had no mishaps and Ian drove home the 100 plus miles back to London after the event, demonstrating true grit and the amazing versatility of the T-type MG.

The resulting 'best times' for the T-types were

Peter Greenaway – 79.13 secs

David Butler – 81.27 secs

Tony Smith – 83.24 secs

Martin Price – 89.93 secs

Ian Potts – 93.29 secs

For full results go to the BARC's web site.

The next round of the Luffield Championship is a one lap sprint at Curborough on 3 April 2011. If you are interested in taking part in your T-type then please contact me, Tony Smith itm.smith@btinternet.com, and I will be very happy to help.

It was good to see both Lawrie Brown and Helen Waddington as their efforts are essential to the smooth running of the Luffield and are most appreciated. An appearance by Howard Harman as a non competitor, both his P and T type are less engines, was a surprise but with luck he will be at Curborough with whichever car he finishes first.

Tony Smith



Picture shows the 5 T-types and drivers next to the lake at Mallory; L to R; David Butler/Peter Greenaway/Tony Smith/Martin Price/Ian Potts



And the 'works' of Tony Smith's TA!

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REFURBISHING A T-TYPE (TD) RADIATOR – THINGS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW!

As with most things on the dear old T-types, things never quite turn out as you expect when it comes to doing any repair or maintenance jobs, for the first time at least! I recently had occasion to do some work on my TD radiator – and found out a few interesting, or at least unexpected, things on the way. Incidentally, I believe these would also apply to most versions of the T-Series radiators (and probably the Y-types as well), but I'll describe it as related to a TD.

It all started during the winter lay-off when I decided (finally!) to overhaul my worn, leaking, and, as transpired, not-quite-standard, steering rack.

Having in the past several times failed to remove the steering rack from the chassis cross member as described in the Workshop Manual. (don't believe it; I know only one person who claims ever to have done it according to the book!), I decided to bite the bullet and remove the whole front end bodywork, radiator and cowling etc. in order to be able to remove the radiator support bracket which impedes the easy "in situ" removal of the steering rack.

Removal

A couple of things I learnt here. (Experienced T-types probably know all this!) First, since I was operating single-handed at the time, I found that I could slide the bonnet central hinge chrome strip off lengthways (after removing the fixed brackets at the radiator cowl and scuttle ends), leaving the bonnet in two manageable halves for removal (That's probably not "correct" but it worked!). Then to remove the front splash apron panel it is first necessary to detach the front bumper at its chassis mountings, and the badge bar, if fitted. (Mine has the "full-monty" of driving lights, badges etc., so these had to be disconnected/detached first.).

Next, undo the two sets of (locked) nuts securing the whole radiator assembly to the radiator support cross bracket ; not easy, since they are often rusted/seized and their accessibility is very restricted in the channel on the underside of the support bracket with

the steering rack directly underneath it. Two thin open end spanners and a lot of "fiddling" finally did it. Note that there are two large rubber and metal disc washers in there as anti-vibration mounts for the radiator. But wait until you try to re-assemble!).

The rest of the radiator and chrome casing/grille assembly then came out according to the book. The radiator support bracket then comes out fairly easily by removing the 2 pairs of short bolts/nuts attaching it each side to the chassis nosepiece extensions. Then it's a relative doddle to remove the steering rack as "Manually" described, having first removed the engine stabiliser rod bracket (unique to TD/TF and YA/B) which impedes the steering pinion shaft until removed, (that's not quite as easy as the Manual suggests either!), and disconnecting the "spider flange" connection to the steering column – much easier with the radiator removed! Incidentally, can anyone tell me how to remove the engine control link bracket from behind the water pump without also removing the whole pump?

Back to the radiator! The chrome casing can be easily detached from the radiator core/tanks assembly by removing the small countersunk nuts/bolts around the edges of the casing but the headlamp mounting bracket plates, which protrude each side through the casing, have to be removed first.

So far so good.

Now the Bad News!

There was nothing actually wrong with the radiator itself, it was not leaking or corroded or partially blocked – but the (steel) Radiator "Saddle" Bracket (or Cradle) below the bottom of the tank, was almost rusted away! (*See the first picture - after its removal from the radiator core assembly*).



Since this also has the two brazed –in locating threaded dowels holding the whole radiator assembly to the chassis cross member, it is rather important that this piece is sound and not damaged and weakened like mine. So, fit a new one, I thought. They are available as a “repair” item from the usual larger parts suppliers (but not cheap, for a bit of pressed tin!). But it is not as simple as it might appear from the Parts Diagrams to actually fit this replacement, short of a complete removal and resoldering at the radiator bottom tank! (A complete replacement Radiator unit for a TD is listed at about £500, so we weren’t going down that route!).

Closer study of the radiator (still the original, with its “Morris Motors, Radiators Branch” badge and serial number on the header tank) showed that the shallow “U” shaped Radiator Support Cradle bracket was in fact an integral part of the original radiator bottom tank and assembly, with vertical locating “tabs” soldered/brazed(?) to the bottom tank. But the sides of the Support Cradle are fixed to the upright side members of the radiator surround by removable set screws. You can easily undo the side fixings, but not the soldered tabs! And what is more, the “replacement” bracket has no upright locating tabs for resoldering to the tank! (*see next picture*).

Comment: The Radiator Support Cradle bracket is not listed as a separate item in the factory TD/TF Parts Lists but it is shown as part of the complete radiator assembly in the associated exploded parts diagram. Presumably, the “after market” replacement parts suppliers invented this as a separate item in response to demand for radiator repairs. But in the YA/YB Parts Lists, the “radiator support cradle”, and its felt packing strip, are listed as specific separate part numbers, but also not shown separately in the exploded diagrams. Interesting! Curious!

The Solution?

What to do? I could take the whole radiator assembly and replacement cradle bracket to a knowledgeable “vintage” radiator specialist, and visit the bank on the way back! But feeling very parsimonious at the time I decided I could do the repair myself, with a few compromises (i.e. without soldering or brazing!).

First, the remains of the old cradle needed to be cut away from the bottom tank; careful work with a hacksaw, and a small disc grinder, achieved this. There were some remnants of what must have been the felt packing strip still stuck to the bracket, but most of this had disappeared some time ago!

(The remains of the locating tabs, which are spot welded to the cradle, can be seen in this Picture



The remains of the locating tabs still soldered to the lower tank were ground carefully back to avoid any sharp protruding edges. So now the old saddle was free from the radiator assembly; time to fit the replacement!

But I first had to fit some alternative locating tabs to the new cradle to ensure it positioned correctly on re-assembly. Another point noted here was that the cradle bracket does not sit symmetrically under the bottom tank but is offset about 1 cm. forward so the locating tabs needed to be offset accordingly. I found some ready-made small angle brackets, already drilled, in my local D.I.Y and after a bit of careful measuring off from the old cradle, worked out how to position these on the new one. Not having a spot welder, I fixed these locating brackets to the new cradle with small pop rivets, which seemed to do the trick! Next, are the locating holes for the side mounting set screws aligned correctly?

As indicated above, the original radiator and cradle assembly had a felt packing strip about 5cm. thick sandwiched between the cradle and the bottom tank. No such replacement felt strip is available from the usual spares sources these days, it seems! But do not despair; I found some suitable adhesive-backed thick felt pad sheet in my local D.I.Y. It worked fine when cut to fit the cradle. The replacement cradle dimensions, as purchased, were such that, when bolted at the side uprights, there was no gap between it and the bottom tank to allow for the felt strip. If fitted without any felt padding, I concluded

that the whole radiator/casing assembly, and hence the bonnet fit, would be 5cm. lower than its original installation – not right! Solution was to elongate the cradle bracket side mounting hole by 5cm. to allow it to fit with the felt pad included (See picture below).



So, the new cradle with its elongated side holes and locating tabs fitted and the felt pad fixed to the bottom tank, was then re-assembled - and here the "purists" might criticise me – I used "JB Weld" as my "cold soldering" alternative to fix the locating tabs to the bottom tank! Seems to have worked OK, and certainly the whole radiator and casing assembly was very nicely and correctly aligned on re-assembly! A further "flush clean" and a repaint (Radiator black aerosol) got it looking like it might have just come back from a £250 re-core and repair! So what else to note when re-assembling?



Re-assembly snags –beware!

First, the radiator support bracket, just above the steering rack, needs to be the correct way round. The mounting holes for the radiator assembly are not centrally drilled in the support bracket, but offset forward (or backward?) of the centre line, whereas the locating holes in the bracket for attachment to the chassis side members are symmetrical, so it's quite easy to get the bracket the "wrong way round, front-to-back."

I've not seen this point mentioned in any of the restoration or overhaul manuals, so the moral is, mark the correct orientation of the bracket when disassembling! I didn't, and several weeks later had forgotten about this! Solution? Go look at someone else's TD, note which way round the bracket is fitted – and measure it!

Even with the bracket correctly aligned, the next "fiddly" bit is getting the packing rubbers and the nuts/washers for the two radiator threaded locating dowels back in place. If you have fairly ordinary sized fingers, it's almost impossible to get between the bracket and steering rack to start the nuts on their threads, whilst also keeping the rubber and metal disc washers in place. Again, after much "fiddling", silicone grease (to hold the washers up under the bracket) and added grunt and expletives, I made it. Somebody please tell me there is an easier way to do this! Incidentally this was fitting the radiator unit without its chrome casing attached! Even more difficult to do it with the casing in place, I suspect?

The Final Lap

But from here on in, it becomes easier. Re-fix side stays to radiator header tank lugs; re-fix chrome casing (6 off c/sunk BA screws and thin nuts; then re-assemble bonnet (reverse of how I removed it; slide the central chrome strip back along the two top edge pressings – with a little help from an "assistant" to keep the parts steady), and we were nearly there.

Important to get the two flat headlamp link brackets through the sides of the rad. shell casing and bolted back to the headlamp support bracket; they appear to provide the earth return circuits for the side and headlamps via the chassis.

None of my lights was working until the whole assembly was back in place and tight. (Memo for future; run separate earth return wires from the lamp housings direct back to a suitable chassis earth terminal).

What else to note? While the radiator was off, I did a bit of chassis clean and repaint of the now accessible areas; fitted a new front engine rubber mounting block; new rubber bushes in the engine stabiliser rod, and "reset" the strut, with the engine in its "at rest" position; overhauled the water pump, and fitted all new hoses. I suppose that's the least one should do, when undertaking a simple steering rack overhaul!

So far so good. Everything seems to be working fine; no leaks; no overheating; steering (after professional rebuild) is now beautifully "tight" and accurate, and seemingly oil leak free as well (which is what started this whole saga). My main thought is now that I hope I don't have to do it all again for some time!

But as I've said before, "Why do just one job, when you can create another ten?"

Alan Wakefield

March 2011

Disc brakes on a TF

In the last issue we featured an article on fitting disc brakes to a TF and the response from Barrie Jones and advice on fitting of a remote reservoir.

Noel has now added the following footnote and his solution to the problem;

The questions raised with Barrie were not about fitting disc brakes as my TF already had these when I bought it. The problem was binding of the disc brakes after the master cylinder was refurbished and refitted.

Addition of a Remote Reservoir to MG TD and TF

MG TD's and TF's have Lockheed brake master cylinders combined with a fluid reservoir.

This reservoir has a limited capacity and access to check the brake fluid level and add fluid is difficult in that the cylinder is located just below the floor near to the foot pedals. To gain access the carpet must be folded back and a metal cover screwed down onto the flooring must be removed. This gives access to the filler plug through a small hole in the flooring.

Even with the steering removed it is difficult to position ones head to see down into the opening and pretty well impossible to add fluid and check the fluid level. The only solution appears to be one which involves a mirror, torch and a purpose made dipstick.

The fitting of a remote reservoir addresses both access and potential low fluid levels, eases the bleeding of the brakes, and enables the car user to see any drop in fluid level by simply lifting the bonnet.

The sketch shows how I installed a remote reservoir to my TF.

The installation was not that easy as access is from above, and this necessitates removal of

the seats, steering wheel, drive and transmission cover and the timber floor panel on the driver's side.

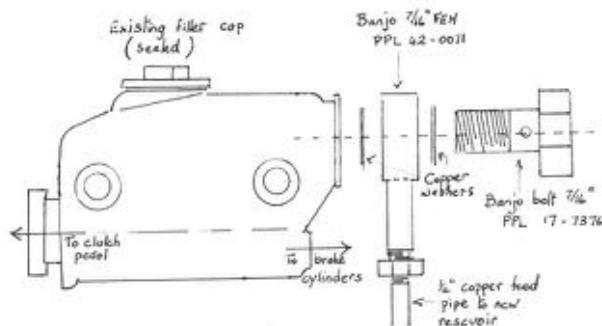
The master cylinder sits in a fairly restricted space between the pedal box and a tubular chassis cross member.

These restrictions were further compounded by the additional supports on the cross member for the 5 speed gearbox fitted onto my car. I found the best solution involved fitting a 7/16 in. female banjo (PPL 42-0071) with a 7/16 in. banjo bolt (PPL 17-7376) and copper washers off the front of the master cylinder. A 1/4 in copper feed pipe was connected to the banjo and then run up to the remote reservoir which I located on the outside face of the tool box under the bonnet. See photo.

Please note that no modifications to the existing master cylinder are required other than the replacement of the filler and cleaning plugs which then can be sealed in place after filling.

However as the work necessitates removal of the master cylinder the owner may take the opportunity to have the cylinder refurbished by a specialist beforehand, Past Parts of Bury St Edmunds can carry out this for you.

Sketch showing connection at the master cylinder



Photograph showing the new brake fluid reservoir attached to the tool box of the TF



MORE SPANNER NOTES

A bit more on the perpetual debate of XPAG rear bearing oil leaks

A précis of extracts of email correspondences between various T-types last summer following Silverstone and the Brooklands Reunion.

The point in question was about the oil drain tube pipe from the main bearing cap in the XPAG.

It was raised at Silverstone when observing a TC race engine that was out of the car, advice was given by one of the bystanders as to how and why the drain tube was supposed to operate to prevent cavitation or separation of the oil by eliminating splash.

The ensuing discussion established that some racers either shortened or even removed this drain tube in their engines.

It was recalled that Roger Wilson in an earlier article had stated that "some later T,Y and XPAW engines had shorter tubes that did not reach the sump oil". He later tested this theory and removed the pipe from his engines and put a drill bit up the hole to eliminate the step at the top.

The debate continued as to whether this was a contributory cause of the oil leaks at the rear main because the oil cannot drain away fast enough particularly if the bottom of the pipe is in the oil.

In Neil Cairns publication "Living with the XPAG" in the engine oil leaks section, he talks about keeping the drain pipe and the plenum chamber clear and that if the pipe is half blocked and the rear bearing worn "so lots of oil comes spurting out!" Therefore if the end of the pipe is in the oil then it is not clear as he says.

The debate rumbles on.....

Editors note.

My thanks and apologies to Alan Wakefield, Ian Ailes and Jeff Marsden for eavesdropping on their email conversations.

Another subject that is close to all of us these days is the threat of drastic changes to the constituent elements of fuels for our cars.

I reprint a piece from Peter Kerr in Australia sent last year on this very topic.

MODERN FUELS

THE AUSTRALIAN POSITION

The compression ratio of the XPAG engine is 7 to 1. If this is still the case with your engine, then the ULP with an octane rating of 91, as mandated for Australian use, by excise regulations, as well as the ADR's, is 20 octane number too high for the motor. Using Australian kerosene, which has an octane rating so low it does not have one, as an additive to the fuel, simply causes smoke, because of the unburnt hydrocarbons. Once the compression ratio gets to 9 to 1, then there is very little unevaporated 91 octane fuel left in the cylinders (if any), because of the effects of Boyles law ($P_1 \times V_1/T_1 = P_1 \times V_2/T_2$), which will take the temperature of the incoming charge well above vapourising temperature for the pressure in the cylinder. The higher octane rating is reducing any tendency to pre-ignition. As to the idea that the fuel will not burn because the flame front moves too slowly across an XPAG cylinder head that will not happen until the rpm is well over 6000.

Finally, the octane ratings used in Australia are, by convention, the lean run number, not the rich run numbers as used in Asia and parts of Europe (until recently). Thus the green 100/130 octane aviation fuel that many historic racing cars have to use that was previously labeled as 100 octane in Australia but 130 octane in Japan, what we call 91 octane in Australia is called 95 octane in parts of Asia . As you have already discovered (I suspect) when run rich there is less likelihood of pinging under load on any motor. If you run an aviation piston motor too lean for too long it will overheat under load but cool quickly when run rich again.

Yours octagonally

Norm Richardson ATA T Register Captain

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