

# So you want to buy a T-Type?

By John James



Above: The author's TC, largely unspoilt and looking much the same in the photo on the right as it does in the early 1950s photo on the left, where it is being driven to a cricket match by the previous owner.

## You want to buy a T-Type?

Well, so do quite a few of you out there! Maybe you owned one several years ago, regretted ever selling it and now want to come back into the fold. Or maybe you had always wanted one from your youth, couldn't quite afford it at the time, but are now in a position to find the money. Whatever your circumstances, welcome to the world of T-Types!

Whenever I am asked about buying a T-Type, the first question I pose is: "Which model do you really want?" In amplification I ask "Do you want a beam axle TA/TB/TC or do you want a TD or TF with coil spring independent front suspension and rack and pinion steering?"

If our prospective purchaser prefers the former, possibly because of the "vintage" look, then there is a further choice between the TA with its longer stroke 1292cc XPJG engine or the freer revving 1250cc XPAG engine of the TB and TC.

Perhaps the more modern steering and suspension set up of the TD and TF models appeals more to our prospective purchaser, in which case there is a straight choice to be made between the TD and TF1250 models (which have the same XPAG engine as the TB and TC). However, within both the TD and TF range there is a further choice to be made. In the case of the TD, a competition model, the TD MARK II (with chassis designation TD/C) was produced by Abingdon, but they are extremely

rare in the UK. Of the 1710 manufactured only 52 were allocated to the Home market, the rest being exported, of which 1593 went to North America. Similarly, most of the TF1500 production (with the 1500cc XPEG engine) was exported. Of the 3400 models produced, only 288 were made available for the Home market.

## Model overview

Confused? Well just to add to it there were a number of special bodied T-Types, the most numerous of which were the Tickford bodied TAs and TBs. Perhaps the following brief guide to each model, taken from the 'T' Register website [www.tregister.org](http://www.tregister.org) will help by building on what has already been written:

"All the T Types share many features. The body is made from an ash frame skinned with steel, bolted to a conventional chassis. The doors hinge backwards, with a cutout for the elbow. The windscreen is hinged, allowing true wind-in-the-hair motoring. The fuel tank is a slab-shaped box bolted to the back of the car with the spare wheel attached to it. The bonnet is a triple-hinged gullwing type, except for the TF, which looks the same but only the tops raise, the sides are fixed. Carburation is by twin SUs, brakes are hydraulic drums throughout. The gearbox is synchro 4 speed with crash first gear (and second on TAs) and the engine a 4 cylinder ohv pushrod. Apart from the

independent front suspension of the TD/TF, the technology and the styling is pre-war, a serious problem by 1955 when the series ended. Ironically, it is these very features that make the cars so endearing today.

**TA** - Announced in June 1936, the TA was a larger Midget than its predecessors, featuring a 1292cc pushrod o.h.v. engine. Initially, the only bodywork available was the traditional MG Sports style with cutaway doors and swept wings, but this was supplemented from August 1938 by coupé coachwork built on Tickford principles by Salmons and Sons of Newport Pagnell. It is believed that only two Airline coupés were produced, of which one survives in the USA. 3003 TAs were produced and the purchase price of each was £222 (sports), £269 (Tickford) and £295 (Airline).

**TB** - Formally announced in September 1939, on the eve of the outbreak of World War II, but available from the Spring of that year, the TB featured the new 1250cc XPAG pushrod engine of shorter stroke than the XPJG it replaced, together with a dry clutch and revised gearbox and rear axle ratios. This engine, the first all-MG design, but derived from the Morris 10 M-series unit, boasted a power output of 54bhp. A derivative of this engine, in highly supercharged form, propelled Goldie Gardner to speeds in excess of 200mph, whilst other famous marques, such as Kieft, Lister, Cooper and Lotus, used modified XPAG engines as

Right:  
Roger's car is the green TA,  
taken on the way to Ypres.  
Brian's car is the red TA, taken  
on one of the Regency Runs.

power plants during the early post war years. Due to the intervention of hostilities only 379 TBs were produced, available in either sports or Tickford styles.

**TC** - Regarded by many as the model which established the British sports car on the N. American scene, there was very little on the surface to distinguish the first post war car to leave Abingdon - the body was 4in wider than the TB (which resulted in narrower running boards with two instead of three rubber strips). In addition, the sliding trunnion location for the road springs, the cause of more complaints to the Service Department than any other, was replaced by a system of rubber bushes and shackles, and a single 12v battery under the bonnet replaced the twin 6v batteries which had been carried in trays just forward of the rear axle. In production from September 1945 to November 1949, exactly 10,000 TCs were produced, all carrying two-seat sports bodywork, although there is a rumour that one was re-bodied as a Tickford. All T-Types up to this point were available only as RHD.

**TD** - Whilst retaining the traditional perpendicular radiator shell and sports body style, the TD brought many changes when introduced in late 1949. Immediately obvious were the 15in steel disc wheels (originally unpierced), RHD or LHD with mirrored dashboards, chromium plated bumpers (although TCs exported to the USA also sported these) and dashboard glovebox. However, out of sight were such items as independent front suspension and rack & pinion steering gear ('borrowed' from the Y-type), a hypoid bevel rear axle, two-leading-shoe front brakes, and (apart from a few early cars), a rollover bar under the scuttle aimed at eliminating body shake and increasing protection to the occupants in the event of an accident. The whole aim had been to produce a sports car with the traditional MG flair but more civilised and, therefore, more attractive to the all-important export market. The TD was, in volume terms, the most successful of the T-Types. The vast majority of the 29,665 produced went abroad - mainly to the States where for most of its life it was the only cheap British sports car available.

**TF** - At the time of its launch, the TF was criticised as a "breathed over" TD, a stop-gap before BMC would allow a more streamlined shape to be marketed (which became the MGA). Today, the aesthetic changes from the TD are regarded as inspired, despite the short time they took to develop, resulting in the prettiest of the T-Types. Bodily the familiar square-rigger was made more rakish - a rearwards sloping radiator shell some 9cms lower than the TD,



### 'AFTER THAT BRIEF GUIDE TO THE MODELS, WHO BETTER TO TELL YOU ABOUT THEIR CARS THAN A SAMPLE OF OWNERS?'

faired-in headlights, a lengthened flare to the rear wings, and a fuel tank less upright than before. The engine was based on the TD Mk II power unit producing 57bhp. This was later enlarged to 1466cc with a new block having 72mm bores against 66.5mm previously, and now giving 63bhp in response to demands from N. American customers. The rear axle ratio was also changed from 5.125:1 to 4.875:1 with centre-lock wire wheels as an optional extra. Bucket seats and a revised dashboard completed the changes. Introduced at the 1953 London Motor Show, the only major production change was to the 1466cc engine in the "TF 1500", the total run being 9600 cars. By the end of the run, in 1955, sales were falling fast, and it was clear that the T-Types were regarded as out-of-date compared to new models from Austin-Healey and Triumph."

#### Owning a TA

Well, that's a brief guide to the models. Who better to tell you about their cars than a sample of owners? Let's start with the TA and two owners, Roger Bragger and Brian Rainbow, who probably do more mileage in their cars than most TA owners.

You can learn a lot about Roger's car and how he came to acquire it from his website [www.rogersstudy.co.uk](http://www.rogersstudy.co.uk). The following is a brief account of how Roger came to acquire the car.

"My interest in MG sports cars started when I was 17, when the journey into Birmingham for my weekly driving lesson took me past a car sales showroom that had for sale a black MG TC for the princely sum of £165. I thought that I could afford that on my apprentice's wage, but asked my father for a loan of the money. I remember his answer to this day, "If you are learning to drive, it cannot be difficult, so I will learn to drive, we will not buy a 'flivver' but something more suitable for me." So he paid for, taxed and insured a 1959 Mk 2 Ford Zodiac but never bothered to learn to drive himself. He



realised it would be easier to ask me to drive him whenever he wanted to go anywhere. There I was at 17 driving a Ford Zodiac and all I had to do was put in the petrol.

Years later I realised it was not much fun driving "Euro-boxes" and wanted more out of motoring. A colleague told me of someone he knew called Tony Stafford who had an MG and that perhaps I should have a chat to him. I did this and found he had an immaculate TF and this rekindled my desire to own a T-Type. He suggested I join the MG Octagon Car Club, which is what I did, going to the Club's local "natter". After they got to know me, "the new bloke without an MG car", one member called John Powell mentioned that a friend of his, Ken Williams, had an MG TA he might be selling. I went to see it, liked it, and purchased it."

Roger and his wife, Fran use the car a lot and it has been on several continental trips. Ken Williams had made a good job of rebuilding the car from boxes of bits and Roger has not had to do too much work on it, the main job being a carburettor overhaul.

#### Now over to Brian Rainbow:

"In the early 60s, shortly after I turned 17 and passed my driving test, I acquired my first car, a 1938 MG TA, purchased for the vast sum of £45. As you would expect, the car was very tired, and was barely road worthy, there being no MoT test in those days. My fellow work-mate and ex-school chum purchased a TC in really nice condition shortly after I acquired my TA. In those days we worked at a Government Wireless station in Buckinghamshire, and within the small group that I worked with there were now 4 T-Types, 2 TAs and 2 TCs. Lunch hours were spent fettling the cars, and many bits were made in the small machine shop that we had. In those days spares, particularly for a TA, were not plentiful, and tyres even harder to get hold of, if you were lucky you might just get the odd Blue Star remould! Most mornings I would meet up with my mate and we would have a real good race through the lanes to work. Sadly, after about 9 months of this abuse, I must have held second gear for too long. Low and behold there ensued a big bang and a con-rod appeared through the block! Shortly afterwards, at the tender age of 18, I did my first MPJG engine rebuild, this time based around a Morris



Rod Sawyer's TA Tickford, which is currently for sale – note beautifully finished interior



I block purchased from a scrap yard! I can also remember around that time taking a young lady called Rosie home on a cold frosty night in the TA, after our first date!

Well to cut a long story short, I acquired my current TA about 10 years ago. She was in relatively good condition, but over the next couple of years I undertook a running restoration whilst still using the car for many runs. The engine and gearbox were rebuilt, as were the brakes, steering and suspension. I took the diff to Roger Furneaux for a rebuild, and whilst there I purchased a pair of his tapered half-shafts and the lip seal/nut conversion for the bearing carriers to stop axle oil coating the rear brakes. The wiring was not too good, the previous owner made his own loom from a roll of yellow wire, not easy when it comes to fault finding when every wire was yellow! We were going to Denmark in July 2000 for the MG European Event, but I had several niggling electrical gremlins. I had a new loom that I was going to fit that following Winter; but two days before departure I gave in, and cut the old loom in two forcing me to change it quickly! Twenty-four hours later the new loom was in place and every thing was working fine, and we had a great trouble free time touring Denmark.

The car has since toured France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Isle of Man etc and covers around 5000 miles p.a. She is not immaculate, but she is reliable, and is looked after like a good lady should be! We get lots of pleasure driving her around, mainly on country roads, and we avoid British motorways at all costs. She will cruise all day at 50mph, however she is nearly 70 years old and needs to be treated with a bit of respect. I hope to keep her for as long



Now, where do I start? asks Jim Manning. Easy, really – all put back together as below!



as I can drive, and would have no hesitation in jumping in her tomorrow and driving to the south of France. I know that as long as I respect her properly, she will reward me and not let me down. Whenever I get the TA out of the garage, Rosie will come rushing out from the house asking 'where are we going?' Now that's TA magic for you!"

There are some who say that the MPJG engine is not worth bothering with and advise fitting an XPAG engine (which can be done). However, they surely fail to appreciate that the MPJG engined TA is a wonderful touring car as demonstrated by Roger and Brian.

## The Tickford T-Types

Mention has been made previously of the Tickford bodied T-Types. These are comparatively rare cars, (especially so in the case of the TB Tickford). I thought it would be appropriate to ask the Tickford Registrar, Rod Sawyer, to write a few words about his car and he duly obliged as follows:

"AVL 812 was purchased from the late Ian Lloyd, after he had spent the previous 15 years having a complete 'chassis up' rebuild. When I acquired the car the interior needed to be finished off and various electrical items sorted out. The car had been fitted with a VA 1550cc engine and gearbox prior to Ian acquiring it and it had also had the VA's instruments and wheels added. I finished the interior; sorted the electrics, including a push button engine start, and had the car MoT'd. The first trip was to an MG meet at Brooklands. Although the car ran quite well and had supposedly had an engine overhaul, the engine had an ominous rumble. We did several local runs, but I found that at

speeds over 60mph the engine temperature rose sharply. After taking the car to the Isle of Wight for the 'T' Register Autumn Tour, I decided to strip the engine to check the supposed rebuild. To my dismay I found the bottom end well worn, hence the rumble, so a reground crank and re-metalled (white metal) mains and rods was called for.

Whilst the engine was in bits I had the head converted to run on unleaded and had 1/8in taken off to raise the compression to something that would suit modern petrol. The engine was refitted to the car and carefully run in. It was a different car, much smoother, more economical and it now held 60mph easily.

Subsequently, we have used the car regularly, covering 1500 miles a year. AVL 812 has been featured in MG Enthusiast and Classic Motoring. It is a very pleasant car to drive with the larger engine that helps it to cruise, on good roads, at around the 60mph mark. The 3 position hood gives a good choice of draught control, or fresh air! All in all, it has been one of my most enjoyable cars."

## The TB Midget

I have long been an admirer of Jim and Betty Manning's TB, but was unaware of its history. Jim has filled in the details of his TB, chassis number TB0592, engine number XPAG 843 and registration number CAY 79, as follows:

"It was about twenty years ago that we first heard of the sad story of a TB that had been stripped down to be renovated and then put aside in a garage and in boxes for 30 years. The owner had reluctantly realised that it was time to sell it as there was no hope of resurrecting the car under his ownership.

We were already MG enthusiasts, having enjoyed touring both here and abroad in our MGB GT and I had always fancied owning a T-Type. So after much thought and three weekends away in the Midlands to view the assortment of parts etc., we brought CAY 79 home on 24th October 1987 (see photo above). The last tax disc which came with the car had an expiry date of September 1953.

During the summer of 1989 we decided that after a great deal of research, many working hours, and a few thousand pounds, we would enter her in the Concours at the MG Car Club event at Beaulieu, if only to find out what we had done wrong. Imagine our delight to be awarded second place by Lord Montague, especially as we had been 'pipped at the post' by a TA, which had just been renovated by professionals, presumably at not inconsiderable expense.

Since then we have had much fun with her, both socially and partaking in events. CAY 79 has been on Regency, Bean Daffodil and Octagon Wings Runs, 'T' Register Weekends and events in France. But for us, the ultimate experience was being one of the sixteen cars that took part in the T Series Diamond Jubilee Continental Tour in June, 1996. This covered France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Belgium

and back to Boulogne. In Germany we were invited to take part in the Nurburgring's annual classic car weekend, The Oldtimers' Festival. The opportunity to drive the TB around the new and old 23 km. historic circuit was just wonderful!"

### The TC Midget

Three TC owners, Anne Downes from West Sussex, Martin Franklin from Kent and Andrew Owst from North East Somerset have kindly provided me with details of their ownership. We start with Anne's account.

"My association with MGs began when I was young (in the 1950s) and I fell in love with a red 1933 MG J2 in a local garage for £150. I scraped together a deposit and paid the balance by HP.

I knew next to nothing about the mechanics and learned by some expensive mistakes – like the need to check the oil level often. But I had lots of fun in it and eventually traded it in for a black TC. This, I think, had been a police car and had a hard life, although it proved utterly reliable. Settling down and family came next and you can't fit many people in a TC!

Over the years I'd had a secret yearning to own another MG and now that I'm middle aged (what used to be called an OAP) and unattached I started looking round for a TC. I eventually found one 'on line'. It had been rescued as a collection of various bits & pieces and over the next 10 years had been completely restored with a detailed photo record and a long list of all new parts with their cost and time taken to fit at each stage. I purchased it in 2000.

Owning such a vehicle, as well as giving me great pleasure, gives pleasure to other people wherever it goes. It's a great way of meeting people and making friends. There's a great camaraderie amongst other owners of classic cars be it a Bentley or Morris 8.

At my age, driving long distances in a TC can be tiring compared with the cocoon of modern cars so my TC driving is mostly with club outings, Regency Run, Silverstone etc. However, this year I fully intend to cross the Channel to the Continent for a small tour before I'm too old. Owning a TC also means that you won't lose money when you eventually sell as they slowly increase in value. If you're thinking of buying one, find someone who has, or has had one. They'll be only too eager to talk, or join one of the many clubs or groups.

Having said that, nearly all early MGs are owned by people who love their cars and lavish care and attention on them. It's rare to find a bad one. They might break down occasionally but most parts are still available. Maintenance is simple compared with modern cars.

The car came with a replacement engine. The original had done 87,000 miles and mileage is now 108,000 miles. I've fitted or had fitted new front springs, higher ratio differential, indicators, temperature gauge, immobilising switch (hidden), new seats (the others were bucket seats and rather uncomfortable!)"



Anne Downes' TC at a Bletchley Park wartime reunion (above) and Andrew Owst in his TC (below).



### Now over to Andrew Owst

"It is often said that classic car enthusiasts tend to be interested in cars they admired as children, and certainly on family outings in my father's capable but mundane saloons in the 1950s I was enthralled by the rakish open sports cars with their swept wings, running boards and cut down doors.

As soon as I became a student I bought my first old banger. Several more cars followed through my college years of which the most expensive cost £25. As graduation approached and I could see the way forward to buy a modern car, pre-war cars were going to the scrap yard in droves. I felt the urge to preserve a piece of British motoring history and fulfil my boyhood dream of a square rigged sports car. My first choice was a PB but the ones in my price range all had Ford side valve engines. Then a fellow student offered me his 1949 TC which was complete but needed full restoration and in April 1968, BKS 175 became mine for the sum of £35! After completion of studies I towed the MG from Farnham, Surrey back to my parent's house in Bristol behind my old Austin Somerset.

Then followed a two year restoration. The ash frame was completely shot and one door post had been crudely repaired with softwood. The front wings were accident damaged and the rear gearbox mounting was cracked – a common TC fault unless strengthened. Wiring, chrome, interior were awful. I stripped the car and commenced a ground up restoration. In those days secondhand spares were plentiful and cheap, but new spares were more difficult with reproduction parts being of dubious quality. New ash bodies were unavailable and therefore



Then (1965) and Now (2005) shots of Martin Franklin and his TC, which he has owned for over forty years.



I made my own out of some excellent English Ash which cost me £2.10s from a local timber yard. I found the most useful tool in shaping the new sections was a drawknife. This was the most time consuming job on the whole car but has proved very successful and is still very sound.

Due to cash constraints I had no option but to spray the car myself in cellulose and the interior was re-trimmed in vinyl. However I enjoyed many years happy TC motoring including my honeymoon in Devon, a trip to the Hausach event in the Black Forest in 1976, and several trips to Le Mans with fellow club members.

Three years ago I decided that the car was looking decidedly tired although mechanically it was good. I decided another rebuild was required which included a bare metal professional respray and the last traces of the accident damage to the front wings were finally repaired. The home made ash body was still in excellent shape. The seats were retrimmed in leather and the wiring loom was replaced with a cloth covered loom. This time round I had the benefit of Sherrell's excellent book which is an invaluable aid.

Modifications which make TC motoring a pleasure include uprating the XPAG engine by boring out to 1350cc with lightened flywheel and modified head from George Edney. The crank was balanced and tufted with all machining being carried out by Oselli. High ratio differential by Roger Furneaux.

The most recent job was to fit the correct Lucas SFT462 fog lamp which I purchased second-hand in excellent condition at Silverstone last year.

Contrary to popular belief, the steering CAN be set up so the car does not keep wandering



Above 'Jim Reeve' in the driving seat at the South West Centre's Oaksey event. Below Malcolm and Linda Sayers enjoying the sunshine in Gabbice Mare, Italy last May.



off course and whilst Bishop Cam steering will never match rack & pinion, I personally do not feel the need to install either VW, Nissan or Ford 105E steering boxes. It is advisable to crack test the drop arm. I also removed the camber wedges which were fitted to the later cars.

I feel it is sacrilege to swap the gearbox for a modern unit as the original has a superb clunky vintage feel and the box is very robust.

I have heard it said that tall people cannot fit. I am 6ft 2 ins. (with too much avoirdupois) and have no trouble although I admit more room for the left foot whilst driving would be nice.

Any lessons to be learnt from the second rebuild? Take care when purchasing the wiring loom. I did not realise until installing in the car that the colours were wrong for the year. In 1949 the wiring was to the Lucas system which apart from being original, would have made maintenance so much easier. The looms supplied by the normal outlets are to an older Nuffield system which is not shown in the "Brown Book" but is illustrated in 'Blower'. Autosparks will make a loom to the correct colours and I wish I had not only gone to them but also taken along the original conduits which I believe they would have fitted as they made the loom. As it is, I was unable to fit the main conduit or the short one to the coil. I also deliberately fitted a veneered dash with black centre panel rather than the vinyl dash and beige centre which would be correct for my car, as I feel the appearance is so much better. However in hindsight I sometimes regret this departure from the original.

Remaining jobs include making up and

fitting the handbrake oilers, details of which I downloaded off the internet, and I would love to fit a modern quartz clock in the original casing within the rev. counter. Has any device been so unreliable as the original electric clock?

Here's to many more years of TC motoring!"

Over to Martin Franklin

Martin bought his car on 14th May 1965. It was advertised in "Exchange and Mart" at an address in New Eltham and the sum of £145 changed hands. Thirty years later a head gasket and a new set of cam followers cost....you've guessed it....£145!

The TC's first engine rebuild was undertaken in a bedroom at Martin's parents' house in Bexleyheath. Progress was pretty rapid and the gearbox was bolted on.....except that the small matter of getting the 'lump' down the stairs rather got in the way. So it was off with the gearbox and the engine was slid down the stairs with the help of Martin's brother.

The second engine rebuild was necessary when Martin blew the engine up in a Production Car Trial. A Marshall supercharger had been bought for £20 and was fitted for the PCT. This was rebuilt several years later with new seals being fitted and Martin ran the car 'blown' until the year 2000 when petrol consumption became an issue.

The car has covered thousands of miles and has toured all over Europe. I think I am quoting Martin accurately when he said in one of his notes to me that TC ownership ought to be prescribed on the National Health for the therapeutic benefits!

## The TD Midget

We talk to 'Jim' Reeve in Wiltshire, Malcolm Sayers in Berkshire and Andrew Murfin in Nottinghamshire for details of their TD ownership. First, to 'Jim'.

"I was 20 when I bought the TC and I learnt a lot about fixing cars over the next 15 months. Fast forward two Midgets, two MGB GTs, a Dolly Sprint and 25 years later when the current "toy" was a VW Beetle Cabriolet (now relieved of the "family car" status due to a company car) the little lady says, "Daughter nearly finished college, mortgage last payment imminent. What are the chances of you getting an MG with the VW plus a couple of grand?"

The gods were on my side that year. I expected that a USA import TD with a Volvo engine would be all we could afford but less than 20 miles away a desperate soul was keen to realise some cash for a business venture and we became the owners of a black TD; LHD, no sidescreens, bright red vinyl seats and an engine bay caked in oily sand. But, hey.....it's a start.

The first winter saw everything but the body-tub off, the chassis wire-brushed and painted (being ex-Californian there was zero rust). The front suspension was overhauled and

was converted to RHD by utilising an MGB rack (dead easy, and I couldn't afford an original type). Fortunately the bodywork polished up well so it didn't need painting. Still no side-screens though!

Then began a couple of years getting to trust it and overhauling anything that broke or caused a problem (generator; voltage regulator; water pump, petrol pump, exhaust, carburettors, etc) and making it more useable i.e. decent lights, amber flashers at the rear; home made side-screens, bucket seats. Oh, and a 5 speed gearbox (Mr Hi-Gear tells me that my article on this in the Octagon 'Bulletin' inspired him to make his now world famous kit. Glad to be of use!).

From this point to today we have averaged around 3000 miles a year regularly visiting family, 90 miles away; and the friends we made at our first T-type week-end, 175 miles away. We invariably holiday in it and have been to Southern Ireland, the Loire region of France (twice) and the fantastic mountainous region of northern Spain where we saw as many 50s and 60s GB registered cars and motorbikes as on the roads around Goodwood at Revival week.

For me the TD is therapy. I'm always planning the next project. Most recently it has been wire wheels and MGA front drums, modern distributor (original held in reserve), fitting of inertia-reel seat belts, Midget seats and the brake system overhaul, involving all new copper pipes, new seals and silicone brake fluid. My current headache is the windscreen wiper motor! Although I think the TF is prettier I can't afford one and anyway, we've got to know each other far too well to part now.

I think my wife would find me something of a handful if I didn't have the TD in the garage. She seems quite happy for us to use it too, and she knows where to find me when I go missing!

Oh, by the way, I've done the sums and it costs me less than a 20 cigarettes a day habit (not including my labour of course!)."

## Over to Malcolm Sayers

"I have always had an interest in the MG marque. It was probably because I grew up in a village near Abingdon and people from the village were employed in the Factory.

The MG that always took my eye was the T-Type, although I didn't appreciate in my early years that there were different models.

I had to wait until the mid '90s until I had enough time to consider owning and restoring a T-Type. My idea was to totally restore a car for long distance touring, to visit as many interesting places in Europe as possible. Showing my car at Car Shows was of no interest to me. So after looking at all the T-Types, I came up with the final two; it had to be a TD or a TF because they have rack and pinion steering and independent front suspension, making them quite a modern driver for their age and their good parts availability was also important. The reason I chose the TD



Andrew Murfin's TD being put through its paces at Prescott.



'T' Register Historian, Roy Miller's TF1500 taking a breather.

to the TF was quite simply that it looked older with the slab grill.

I purchased the car in late 1997 and it took me a good 6 months to restore as my full time job. I remember on the first test drive after the restoration being utterly disappointed with the car's gearing. It was so low geared that it would be useless for the long distance touring I wanted to do. I have always carried out modifications with a view to making my TD a better driver with safety in mind for today's road conditions, without making the modifications irreversible. The main modifications are:

The engine is balanced and bored to 1350cc, big valve head with a Crane cam and 9:1 compression, 1.5in carbs with an extractor manifold. Hi-gear 5 speed gearbox conversion with 4.5 rear axle. Lucas LRA 780 alternator fitted (modified to take the rev counter drive). Quartz halogen headlight conversion. Heater fitted (to keep Linda warm and happy!)

To date we have visited Greece, Sicily, Sardinia, Italy, France Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and Ireland. We have covered about 85,000 miles in the TD since its restoration and in the last 5 years we have travelled between 12 and 15,000 miles each year. We have made many friends in the MG family, it's a wonderful way to meet people and see their country."

#### Over to Andrew Murfin

Andrew has written a superb article on buying a T-Type and I deeply regret not having the space to use much of it here. However, I will publish it in the March Issue of *Totally T-Type* which can be accessed on the 'T' Register website [www.tregister.org](http://www.tregister.org)

If you are considering buying a T-Type, Andrew wisely suggests that the first thing you should do is to get your "significant other", if you have one, on board with the idea.

Like Anne Downes, he recommends that you talk to an existing owner and if possible, ask

### 'I HAVE ALWAYS CARRIED OUT MODIFICATIONS WITH A VIEW TO MAKING MY TD A BETTER DRIVER WITH SAFETY IN MIND FOR TODAY'S ROADS'

him/her to accompany you to see a car. (The 'T' Register will normally be able to put you in contact with a local owner).

He stresses the importance of standing back to see how the car "sits", the fit of the panels and the condition of the paintwork. If the car needs a new body tub, this is the most expensive part of the car. If the car needs a respray the whole car will need to be taken apart if a thorough job is to be done. This is not cheap!

It will not be to everybody's liking to crawl about underneath the car, but the general condition of the vehicle's underside will give you a measure of how well the car has been cared for.

The engine should tick over comfortably at about 800rpm and oil pressure should be at least 20psi at idling speed, rising to 45psi plus at 2000rpm. There should not be any untoward knocks or unwelcome noises. A test run should enable you to assess how well the car runs and drives. It should stop in a straight line.

The above hardly scratches the surface of Andrew's advice but space constraints dictate!

The TD is used mainly for touring, including some lengthy trips to mainland Europe and Andrew reckons that its annual mileage is around 5000 miles.

#### The TF Midget

Roy Miller has owned three TF 1500s. The first (LKU 261) was purchased in 1960, kept for 3 years before being traded in for a MGA engined TVR Grantura. The second was a LHD car, bought in 1996 to replace a lovingly rebuilt MGB. This was used extensively for 'T' Register

and other classic car events until the third and present Home market car became available.

At the time of purchase, a clatter from the rocker box area enabled a reduction in the asking price to be negotiated. This was just as well since a new camshaft and rocker parts were found to be needed.

The car has done trips to the Loire Valley and Brittany as well as 'T' Register weekends to Derbyshire, Shropshire and the Yorkshire Dales. Roy has just fitted a 5 speed gearbox and is clearly delighted with his TF1500.

#### Over to Barrie Jones

Barrie is the 'T' Register Technical Specialist for the TD/TF models. He bought his TF1500 in 1966 for £350 and has covered more than 250,000 miles in the car. Barrie has helped hundreds of TD/TF owners with technical queries and his book, modestly priced at £6, is a Register best seller.

If you are thinking of buying a TF, or if you are a TD or TF owner and don't have a copy of the book, you will find it extremely useful. You can purchase it from me, John James (for further details please see this month's 'T' Register Notes).

#### Barrie's Notes

