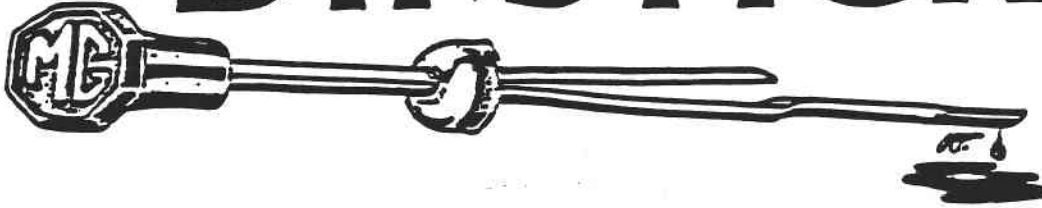


# THE DIPSTICK



President.....Ken Bingham  
Vice President...Bob McClaren

Secretary...Cynthia Faschini  
Treasurer.....Jim Villers

Editor....Chris Holcomb

Vol XX No. 7

August 1993

## MARQUE TIME:

**WOW!** What a record turn out for our July meeting! Our special thanks to Betty and Jim for hosting the meeting and what a "dream" garage Jim has built! With our membership growing and growing, hosting a meeting is really a challenge. I personally appreciate all the work and cost that goes into hosting a meeting. Thanks to everyone who has or will have hosted one of our club meetings. Again, thanks Jim and Betty for a super evening.

As our club grows we might have to be "**thinking**" about a place to hold our monthly meetings - it's getting almost out of control to host 50-75 people in your home. Just think about the cost? When was the last time you bought beer for 50 plus people?

Gregg Coogan came to my calling for and volunteered to be the new Regalia Chairperson! He has lots of great ideas and of course now everyone seems to be telling him how it should be done! I think this is a very important part of our club and I wish Gregg all the success in his effort to make "**OUR**" Club's regalia the best on the East Coast! Also a special thanks to Greg Keeler for selling the raffle tickets. It's good to get the young people involved in our club! Thanks Greg!

Lots of our members were able to make it to the British Car Day in Bowie. And thanks to Bob/George Ulrich (he put a new wiring harness in my TD while I was out of town playing Navy), Carol and I were able to drive our TD to the car show. Thanks Bob! We got there a little late to enjoy all the events this British Car Day has to offer, but I would like to mention that I did make it to the flea market area and bought a self cancelling turn signal switch from Liverpool Motor Works. Once I got the switch home I found a broken contact, I called Jerry at Liverpool Car Parts to ask him if he knew where I might get a new contact? Needless to say Jerry sent me the new contact (no cost). It was a pleasure doing business with him and look forward to seeing him at future car events!

**Finally the weather was great** for this year's annual pool party hosted by Judy and Bob Miller (Andy too)!!! We had a great turn out and lots of fun. Their pool and yard were picture perfect and a much welcome relief, thanks to all the hot days we have been having. What a feeling to lounge in the pool with an ice cold brewski, the aroma of the barbeque wafting in the air, and listening to all the chatter and laughter! And then to taste all the side dishes we brought! Everyone enjoyed themselves and winter seemed a million months away! Once again a special thanks to the Millers for having us. We really appreciated it!!!

The Car Club Council of Hampton Roads is an excellent organization of which our club is an affiliated member. The council represents 26 car clubs in Hampton Roads and can help us from planning a car event to keeping us aware of what is happening in legislation. I quote from the Dipstick of July 1974 (back then called the Tidewater MG "T" Monthly Bulletin):

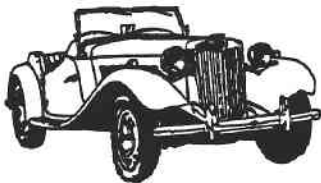
"LEGISLATION - Mike Ash discussed problems that might arise if state or federal Legislatures passed laws that would be retroactive to our T's and might keep them off the road or make us modify them to meet new standards. A letter stating our position and concern will be drafted and brought to our next meeting for the membership to vote on. It will probably be addressed to the Virginia General Assembly and ask to keep us informed of any pending laws effecting our cars."

That was over 19 years ago and laws are being passed that we as a club should be aware of, good or otherwise. They have the potential of anything from retrofitting catalytic converters in older cars to having to load the T's on a trailer so we can go to the next MG meeting!

Let's just become aware is all I ask and keep abreast of what is going on. That is where the Car Club Council of Hampton Roads can help. Also, as a club we should be thinking of ways we can help our environment. It might be anything from adopting a highway to buying an emission tester and giving free tests. Anyway, I hope I've created some controversy and maybe got some of you thinking of ways our club can help!

**DUES, DUES, DUES!!! Dues R Do! Pay your dues! Dues were due July 1st. Our By-Laws state if not paid by the end of August you will be dropped from the mailing list of our newsletter "The Dipstick". Remember your dues covers the cost of postage and printing of the "The Dipstick". "The Dipstick" keeps you posted on past and future events of our club plus other MG events, places, and things and some times excellent technical advice! So please pay your dues and keep our club active!!!**

The time of year is approaching for our nominating committee to come up with a slate of officers for next year. If interested in a position or want to keep your present job please let me know!!!



Lets all go to the next meeting and see how many Club Members will fit in Bill's garage!!! Until then . . .

*Safety first!*  
*Ken*  
KEN BINGHAM

AT THE TIME THE DIPSTICK WENT TO THE PRINTER MINUTES OF THE JULY MEETING WERE NOT AVAILABLE. A READING OF THE MINUTES WILL BE OFFERED AT THE AUGUST MEETING AT WHICH TIME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS WILL BE MADE AS LONG AS THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY OR HAVE ANY REAL BIG WORDS IN THEM. ED.

DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER DIPSTICK MONDAY AUGUST 16, 1993.

## MEMBERSHIP NOTES

If you haven't been receiving your copy of **THE DIPSTICK**, it's because the U.S. Postal Service has been delivering some of them to the host of the next meeting whose name happens to be on the reverse side from the mailing label. We'll try to prevent future issues from going astray. If you haven't received your monthly issue at least a few days before the scheduled meeting, please contact one of the club officers for details.

Please add these new members to your roster:

**Doug Baker**  
5403 A Lane Place Drive  
Williamsburg, VA 23188  
(804) 220-0519  
73 B (Orange)

Doug is a physicist who joined by mail. Hopefully, we'll see his B at the next meeting.

**Bob Mosby**  
220 Sterling St. #51  
Norfolk, VA 23505  
(804) 489-2377  
67 B-GT Special (Orange)

A sailmaker who also joined by mail, we look forward to seeing Bob in August.

**Lee & Rosemarie Pease**  
1340 Lakeview Drive  
Virginia Beach, VA 23455  
(804) 363-8083  
57 A (Black)

Lee is a packing specialist in one of the local logistics organizations. Their MGA will be a good addition to our club.

**Doug & Jeanette Squires**  
4909 Orleans Drive  
Portsmouth, VA 23703  
(804) 484-8028  
77 B (Ruby Red)

Jeanette is a bookkeeper for ALPACK Container Co. while Doug is a Senior Chief Petty Officer in the Coast Guard.

At the July meeting we also welcomed **Sandra Racine** and **Cheri Bishop** who were attending for the first time with their husbands.

July 1st is now past so membership renewals are overdue. We've had 55 members joined to date but many previous members have not renewed. **Peggy Bradford**, **Robert Davis** and **Bob Jordan** were at the last meeting so know they plan to renew. We're looking for renewals from the members below so please fill out the 1993 Membership Application/Renewal form found in this **DIPSTICK** and send it to me with your check. Thanks, Ned Kuhns 552-0292

Anton, Baldrige, Bierwerth, Brannon, Browne, Eaton,  
Ferko, Fillmore, Gold, Hodges,  
Hughes, Jackson, Jolly, King, Lund, Mathews, Micken,  
Moseley, Nabers, Nichols, OBrien, Parks, Pryor,  
Rollins, Slaby, Stoops, Tayon, Thiergardt, Vahl, Wallach &  
Faschini, Winner, Woodson, Philip Ash, Henry, & McGrigor.



THE TIDEWATER MG CLASSICS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL - 1993

Annual membership dues are payable on July 1, 1993. The fee for local residents (Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Hampton, Newport News and Williamsburg) is \$15.00 per year. For those joining after January 1994, the fee is \$7.50. The fee for out-of-area residents is \$5.00 per year.

Please complete all of the following information so that we may maintain up-to-date membership records. Please include the first name of each member.

NAME(s): \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

MGs OWNED:	MODEL	YEAR	COLOR
Car #1	_____	_____	_____
Car #2	_____	_____	_____
Car #3	_____	_____	_____
Car #4	_____	_____	_____
Car #5	_____	_____	_____

MG REGISTER MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:

T-Register (NEMGTR) \_\_\_\_\_ MGB Register (NAMGBR) \_\_\_\_\_  
 MGA Register (NAMGAR) \_\_\_\_\_ MGC Register (AMGCR) \_\_\_\_\_  
 MGB Register (AMGBR) \_\_\_\_\_

Please remit payment by check or cash. Checks should be made payable to "Tidewater MG Classics". Forward with this form to:

Ned Kuhns, Membership Chairman  
 4695 Haygood Point Court  
 Virginia Beach, VA 23455  
 804-552-0292

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Amt. Rcvd.	_____
Date:	_____
Initial:	_____

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! THE TIDEWATER 'MG CLASSICS ANNUAL PIG ROAST/CAR SHOW WILL BE SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 1993 AT CHRIS AND SHELLEY HOLCOMB'S IN CHESAPEAKE. WATCH FOR A FLIER IN NEXT MONTH'S DIPSTICK.

### ACTIVITIES

SAT JAN 30	CHILI COOK-OFF	BINGHAMS/ASHES
SAT FEB 20	SPAGHETTI WAREHOUSE	PEGGY BRADFORD
SAT MAR 13	BOWLING PARTY	CAROL BINGHAM
SUN APR 25	CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH	ANDY & CYNTHIA
SAT MAY 22	20TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER	COMMITTEE
SUN JUN 13	GRAND PRIX TAILGATE PARTY (FUNKHANA/PICNIC)	ASHES
SUN JUL 11	POOL PARTY/POTLUCK	MILLERS
SAT AUG 14	GET-TOGETHER WITH RICHMOND CHAPTER	BINGHAM/ANDRES
SUN SEP 26	PIG ROAST/CAR SHOW	HOLCOMBS
— OCT —		
— NOV —	TURKEY SHOOT	
SAT DEC 4	CHRISTMAS PARTY	KEELERS

### TECH SESSIONS

SUN FEB 28	FRANK LINSE
SUN MAY 16	PAM & VINCE GROOVER
SUN AUG 29	ROBERT DAVIS
SUN NOV 7	TERRY & SUE BOND AND FRANK LINSE

### MEETINGS

WED JAN 6	ASHES
TUE FEB 2	DAVIS
WED MAR 3	ESCOBIOS
TUE APR 6	KUHNS
WED MAY 5	BINGHAMS
TUE JUN 1	McCLARENS
WED JUL 7	VILLERS
TUE AUG 3	KEELERS
WED SEP 1	WALLACH/FASCHINI
TUE OCT 5	ULRICHS
WED NOV 3	KENNEDYS

### TO HOST OR HELP HOST AN ACTIVITY

PLEASE CALL PEGGY BRADFORD (427-3365) OR CAROL BINGHAM (481-3635)

### OTHER CLUB ACTIVITIES

MAY 13-16	CARLISLE, PA FLEA MARKET & CAR SHOW
JUN 23-28	GOF MK 56 PORTLAND, ME.
JUN 27	BRITISH CAR DAY BOWIE, MD.
JUL 30-AUG 1	CARLISLE, PA FLEA MARKET & CAR SHOW
??	LIME ROCK, CT. RACING
SEP 19	RICHMOND BRITISH CAR DAY, BERKLEY PLANTATION
SEP 25	MGS ON THE ROCKS, MGS OF BALTIMORE, LTD.
SEP 29-OCT 2	GOF MK 57 BURLINGTON, VT.
SEP 30-OCT 3	CARLISLE, PA FLEA MARKET & CAR SHOW
OCT 2	WAYNESBORO BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL
OCT 1-3	VINTAGE CAR RACES, SUMMIT POINT, WEST VA.
OCT 7-9	HERSHEY, PA FLEA MARKET & CAR SHOW

*The Central Virginia MG Classics*

*and*

*The Greater Richmond Sailing Association*

*cordially invites you*

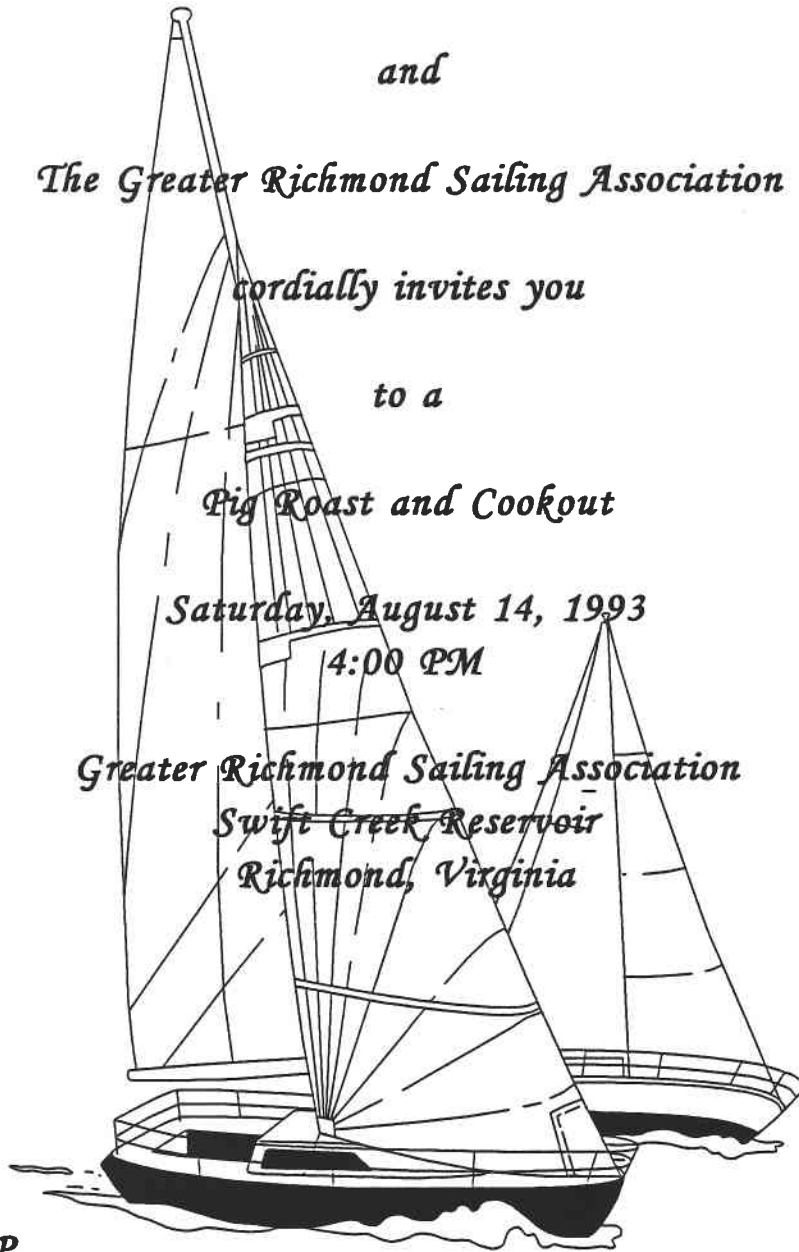
*to a*

*Pig Roast and Cookout*

*Saturday, August 14, 1993*

*4:00 PM*

*Greater Richmond Sailing Association  
Swift Creek Reservoir  
Richmond, Virginia*



*R.S.V.P.*

*Carol Bingham*

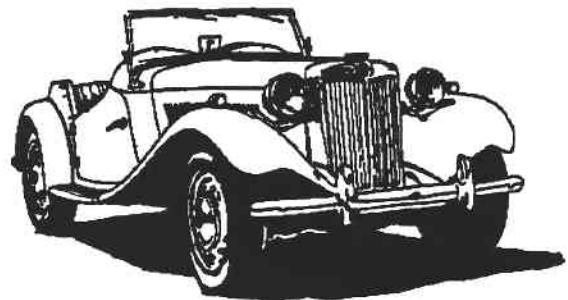
*481-3635*

Our friends in Richmond have invited us to join them for a special summer evening of fun! Good cars, good friends, and our favorite ... good food!!!

Members of their club have offered the hospitality of their homes to put us up overnight. And it would be fun to caravan up and back!

Please let Carol know ASAP. Maps will be available at the next meeting.

One of the magical parts of owning an MG is the wonderful camaraderie that develops between us. Come on out and hear some new stories, and get to tell some of yours!!!



THIS MONTHS TECHNICAL OFFERING WAS PILFERED WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM A DOGEARED ISSUE OF mgTalk, THE SOUTHEASTERN MG T REGISTER NEWSLETTER. MANY THANKS!



## Technical Corner

by Don Harmer

### Common Electrical Problems

The most common electrical problems encountered on MG's involve faulty connections, usually due to corrosion and oxidation. This is not surprising since our MG's are at least 12-years old (1980 MGB) with our T-cars being 37 to 55 years old. Over time, with exposure to humid atmospheres, ozone, salt, and other atmospheric pollutants, any metals other than gold and platinum will corrode. Quick disconnects, such as the "bullets" used on most cars and/or the spade lug type, trap moisture and will eventually corrode, even if cadmium plated as are most such connectors. Screw-type connectors and bolted together connections are less prone to failure, but even these are not corrosion free, particularly if the connections involve steel as do most ground connr

Of particular problem are ground connections. These usually involve at some point using the frame (T & MGA) or body in uni-body cars (MGB) as part of the circuit return path to the battery. The T-cars present a particular problem in that the body panels and the fire wall are fastened to the wood body frame by tacks or bolts and are not fastened together electrically. The fenders are bolted to the body with wetting sandwiched between. Even the body is fastened to the frame with felt or rubber pads between the metal surfaces. These trap moisture leading to corrosion. The early MG's did not depend on any panel making a ground connection to any other panel thru contact alone, but ran separate grounds wires in the wiring harness which then interconnect at the battery ground on the fire wall (all electrical connections on the front half of the body), to the engine block, or to the frame at the lower bolt on the spare tire carrier. A separate ground strap connects the engine-transmission assembly to the frame and fire-wall. This connection is absolutely critical to the proper operation of the entire electrical system as is the battery ground to the fire-wall!

Bad connections are of two kinds, open connections, and high resistance connections. Of these, the open connection in a "hot" wire is the easiest to find. A test amp or a voltmeter gives you a "go - no go" indication directly. Then you can trace the wire path back thru to the source of the voltage, usually a switch or the battery. Caution, there may be intermediate connections which can be faulty and or broken wires. A good wiring diagram

is essential to locating this kind of fault. In the MG-T series the wiring was simple and essentially unchanged over the production, from 1937 to 1955. The major change being the introduction of turn signals. MGB's on the other hand became a nightmare of changing wiring harnesses. Different markets had entirely different electrical gadgets, and these were introduced at different times during the production year. Unfortunately in the 1968 thru 1975 era, it is impossible to find a diagram that clearly and completely agrees with a given US Market car. See for example the Haynes Manual on the MGB. The "Factory" Manual has only one or two of the many variations that were produced.

The wiring in the early MG's was rubber insulated and cotton covered. With age the rubber hardened and become brittle and broke away from the wires and the cotton often dry-rotted. This often led to shorts in the wiring harness if it was flexed. The introduction of vinyl based insulation has improved this situation enormously. A side benefit was the color-coding of the vinyl rather than the cotton covering which always absorbed grease and oil and then dirt so as to become a unidentifiable.

The most difficult problems however revolve around poor or faulty grounds. These can produce strange and unusual results that at first lead you to believe that you have shorts or opens in the harness. A typical example is the side lamps on a TF which include the turn signals. If the separate ground wire does not make good ground connection back to the battery, when you turn on the side lamps they glow (more or less) by getting the ground back thru the turn signal filaments. Then if you switch on the turn signals, the side lamp filament goes out and you either can't see the turn signals or they appear to flash dimly but alternately with the rear signals. The problem is you aren't drawing enough current to light the turn signal filament and when it is on the side lamp is seeing the same voltage applied to both sides of the lamp. When the turn signal lamp should be off the side lamp can now be on, getting it's ground partially thru the turn signal filament. Most often both front lamps will flash together in this case. The problem is while the lamp body is bolted to the fender, this is not a satisfactory ground. A separate ground wire must be present back to the ground connection cluster on the side of the battery box, and this connection must be clean and corrosion free. Any poor connection can indicate as being OK if little current is being drawn, but can drop most of the voltage if high current is drawn, as is the case with the connections to the battery when you attempt to start the car.

The head lights and park/turn lights connect a separate ground wire to ground wires in the harness via the "bullet" connectors and thence back to a bolt thru the side of the battery case. This bolt also anchors the battery ground wire completing the ground circuit. The "bullet" connectors should be cleaned and scraped, and

the double ended female connectors replaced at all corroded or if the "spring" clips inside are broken. This kind of fault is often intermittent, and the vibration while running or the moving of the connection while searching for the fault can often change the symptoms. Similar things can happen if the connections to the base of the lamps are poor, wiggling the wires sometimes makes the symptom vary.

In the late TF and the MGA and MGB the fuel pump is located in the rear and mounted in a rubber sleeve that insulates it from its metal bracket. The ground wire is essential! This connection is made in common with the tail lamps, fuel gauge and license plate lamp to a bolt at the lower end of the spare tire carrier in the T's or to the license plate bolt in the MGA and MGB. Age invariably makes this connection to "the frame" suspect. One then thinks he has a faulty or intermittent fuel pump, bad brake lights, bad rear turn signals, bad tail lights, or some combination of the above, depending on which combination of the grounds is being made and which can find alternate paths thru other lamps. A big clue is often that if you turn the ignition on, the license plate lamp (and the side markers on later B's) glow then you have a bad ground at this rear point. The current is feeding thru the fuel pump and thence thru the common ground point (which isn't true ground) thru one or more filaments to a good ground somewhere in the system. One can often test this by using a good clip lead from a known good ground to this common point. The strange symptom will disappear. (The lamp will go out and the fuel pump will now work). Sometimes the fuel pump will work if the lights are not on, but stop when the lights are turned on. Since the fuel pump draws about 3 Amps when working, high resistance grounds can be very troublesome. One might consider running a separate ground from the pump to a good "frame" bolt. This has cured many a "those SU Fuel Pumps" problems.

Use a "star" type lock washer rather than the more common "split" type lock washer for good electrical connections via bolts. The "split" lock washer only digs in at one point thru paint and eventual corrosion, whereas the "star" digs in at 10 to 12 points, making for a better, lower resistance connection.

The essential grounds that must be good and corrosion free include the connections to the battery posts, battery to starter and battery cable to ground, engine to frame or battery, and then all the auxiliary electrical devices to one of these points. A bad engine to "frame" connection may pass the high current (30-60 Amps) thru the choke or throttle cable with much attendant smoke and sometimes fire. This happens often after an engine rebuild when the installer neglects to refit the grounding strap or doesn't ensure that both end are tightly fastened.

In summary, if it's behaving strangely, first look to the ground connections.

I HAVE HAD A FEW REQUESTS FOR THE ADDRESS TO SEND AWAY FOR SEATBELT REPLACEMENTS COVERED BY RECALL OF FAULTY ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT ON 77-80 MGBs. WELL, HERE IT IS: JAGUAR CARS INC., ATTN. RECALL DEPT., 555 MacARTHUR BLVD., MAHWAH, NJ 07430-2327. SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG TO FIND IT! ED.

N ↑

SUFFOLK ←

→ NORFOLK  
VA. BEACH

MEETING

SAT, AUG 3, 1993

KICK OFF TYRES 7:30PM

BUSINESS 8:00PM

HOSTED BY:

BILL & LIBBY KEELER

636 MONTEBELLO CIRCLE

CHESAPEAKE, VA

547-2709

DOMINION BLVD  
RT 104

CGH

BATTLEFIELD BLVD  
RT 168

KEMPSVILLE RD.

168 BYPASS



G.B. BRIDGE

TCC

LAS GAVIOTAS

WATERS RD. →

AUTUMN CARE →

PINES OF WARRICK DR

(NOT WARRICK RD.)

CEDAR RD.  
1.6 mi

MT. PLEASANT



THE HOLCOMBS  
601 HEAD OF RIVER ROAD  
CHESAPEAKE, VA 23322



FIRST CLASS



Secretary's Minutes

July 7, 1993

The meeting began promptly at 8:00 with a record crowd of 53 members. Almost everyone was present except for Cynthia, our secretary (come back, Cynthia!). Ken thanked Jim Villers and Betty Blankenship for hosting the meeting. The minutes of the June meeting as appearing in **THE DIPSTICK** were approved and our host (a.k.a. treasurer) reported that we now have \$1,462.47, to be spent on Ken Bingham's Going Away Party.

Ned Kuhns acknowledged new members: Sandra Racine, Cheri Bishop, Lee and Rosemarie Pease, and Doug and Jeanette Squires. We had one guest present: Donald Lewis who is looking for an MG and may decide to join.

Carol Bingham reported that the tailgate party was a huge success, thanks to Jennifer Ash. Chris Holcomb doesn't have a date for the September pig roast but one will be found and announced shortly. After extensive discussion, the membership unanimously approved roasting a pig rather than oysters or other delicacies. The Berkley Car Show is scheduled for September 19. At the present time, no social activity is planned for October. The Richmond Club has invited us to participate in a cookout at Brandon Mill Reservoir on Saturday, August 14 at 4:00 PM. A flyer will be published and if you're interested, please call Carol at 481-3635.

The Ulrich's have asked to retire from the Regalia Committee Chairmanship. Gregg Coogan generously volunteered to take over this important position. The club is looking to procure new T-shirts. They will also fit A's, B's, Y's, etc.

Spare Parts Chairman Robert Davis presented a one-piece valve, whose name escaped the interim secretary, that helps keep carburetors from overflowing.

Ken thanked Scoobie and Paula Escobio for hosting the Australian couple who drove across the U.S.

Under new business, members expressed interest in joining the Car Club Council of Hampton Roads, which represents 26 local car clubs. One of the current activities of this group is fighting a proposed "clunker law" which would reimburse owners \$750 to turn in cars older than 1981 for scrap. Bob Jordan expressed concern about a new technology to measure emissions in California. Since pre '75 models are considered gross polluters, drivers are being told to keep these cars off the road. Because some Virginia cities are considered polluted, the club needs to become involved politically so that we don't lose the ability to drive our older cars or be forced to install emission control systems. See Ken for sample letters to send to our senators/representatives. Discussion of this issue will be continued at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Kuhns